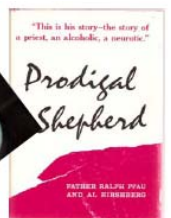
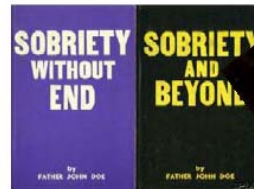
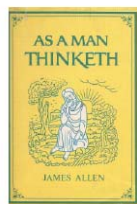
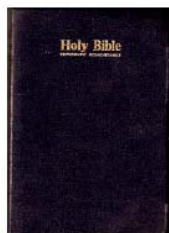
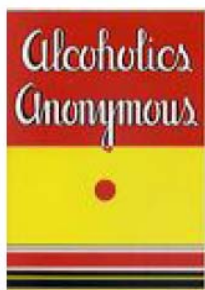


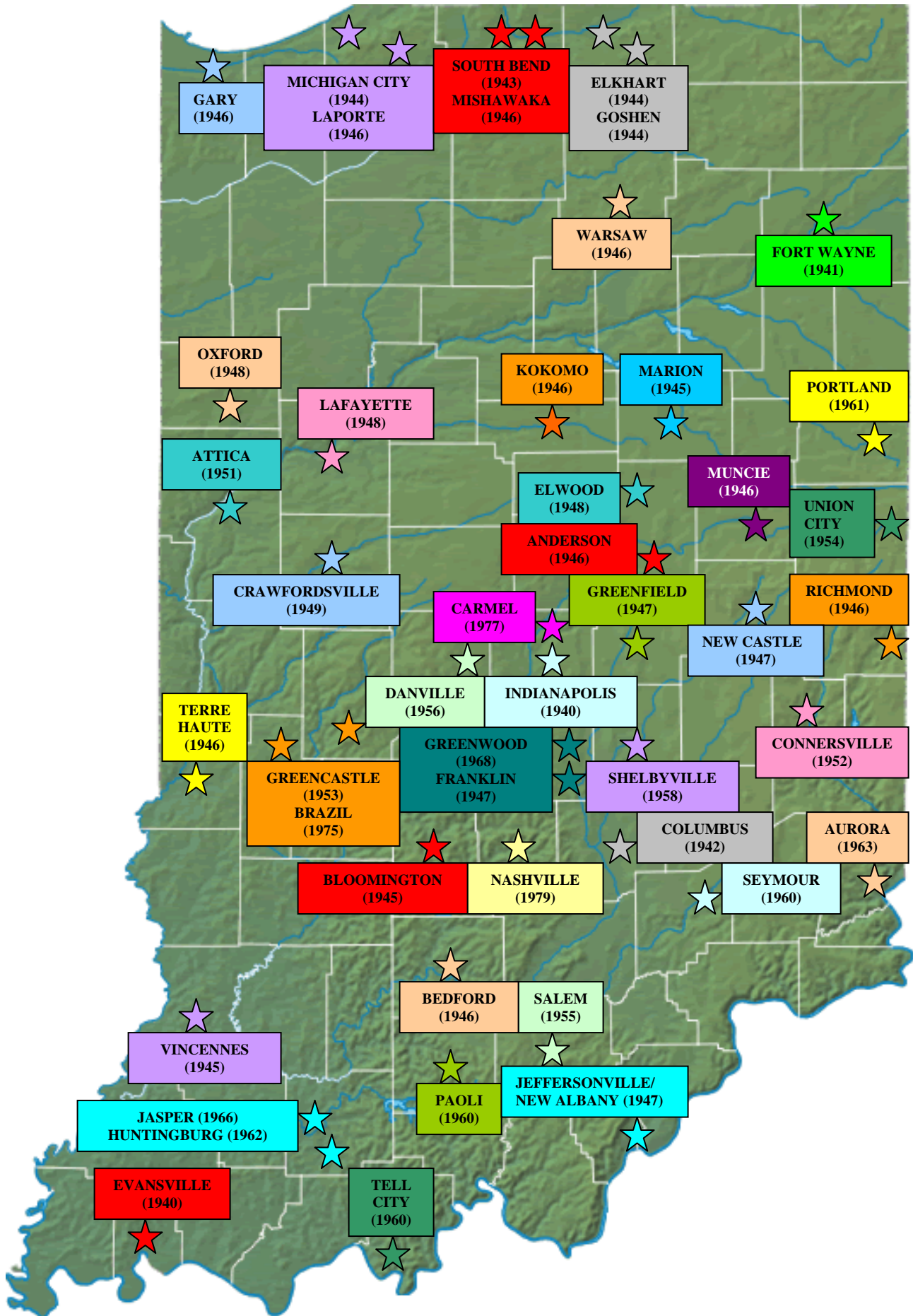
# Early Indianapolis A.A. *A Pictorial View*



By  
Bob S.



# INDIANA A.A. BEGINNINGS



## Forward

This book was originally designed to offer a photographic essay of the structures used by AA groups in Indianapolis during the 1940s and 1950s. However, further progression expanded interest to other sites of undeniable interest, such as hotels, treatment centers and clubs. Agreed, this edition may be far less than complete in said undertaking, but it is hoped that interested parties will offer more information as years pass. Consequently, this volume may best serve as a magnet to attract needed photos and historical artifacts for our next edition.

The difficult and often tedious research, as well as the editing, for this effort was accomplished by Bruce C., from Muncie, Indiana. Bruce spent many hours in libraries, on line and traveling to distant locations. He did all the photography, save for the old photographs and postcards which he derived from PC investigations which included city directories and old phone books.

Many thanks also goes to Neil S., from Fishers, Indiana, for information we derived from his earlier book titled, *History of Indianapolis AA.*, as well as shared knowledge via personal conversations. Thanks also to The Indianapolis Central Office Archives Committee for kindly allowing us to research in their office.

This is a public version of a confidential book for AA members only. First names with the first initial of their last names are used. This is keeping with A.A.'s tradition of personal anonymity at the level of public media.

This book does not reflect the opinion of the fellowship of Indianapolis Alcoholics Anonymous, nor the General Service Office of Alcoholics Anonymous, or Alcoholics Anonymous as a whole. The contents of this book are the sole responsibility of the author.

It is my hope that you find this book informative and enjoyable.

Bob S.

Published January 2011

# Disclaimer, Acknowledgments and Credits

The “Trusted Servants” who worked, in service, on this project do not claim to speak for any specific member or group, nor do we infer any representation of A.A., as a whole.

Those who were privileged to assemble the photos and narratives included in this humble effort, would like to respectfully thank all those who previously contributed to the wealth of historical information, on the early years of A.A., which is currently readily available within the Public Domain.

Every effort was been made to maintain the anonymity of all A.A. members, past and present. Fortunately, the General Service Office of Alcoholics Anonymous has made public, many cherished photos and specific information concerning the pioneers and founders of A.A., which often includes first and last names. All such references have been faithfully reproduced and appropriately quoted.

Additionally, several web sites previously published photos and other memorabilia into the Public Domain which also served to augment the images presented herein.

It is hoped that all who view this presentation, will enjoy the story told and that they will receive the information in the spirit of the sharing of A.A.'s “experience, strength and hope,” in which it is provided.

# First Indianapolis AA Member

**Doherty S\_\_\_\_\_** (1892-1953)

Doherty's niece, Laura, described him as a devoutly religious family man who was full of fun and steady as a rock. His friends never saw him drunk and received news of his illness with stark disbelief. But in the spring of 1936, Doherty became ill with a damaged liver and had to stop drinking—his life depended on it, but he could not. Consequently, he became a patient in the alcoholic ward of Menninger's Hospital, in Topeka, Kansas; but he



**Doherty S\_\_\_\_\_ town residence**  
4750 N. Central Ave.

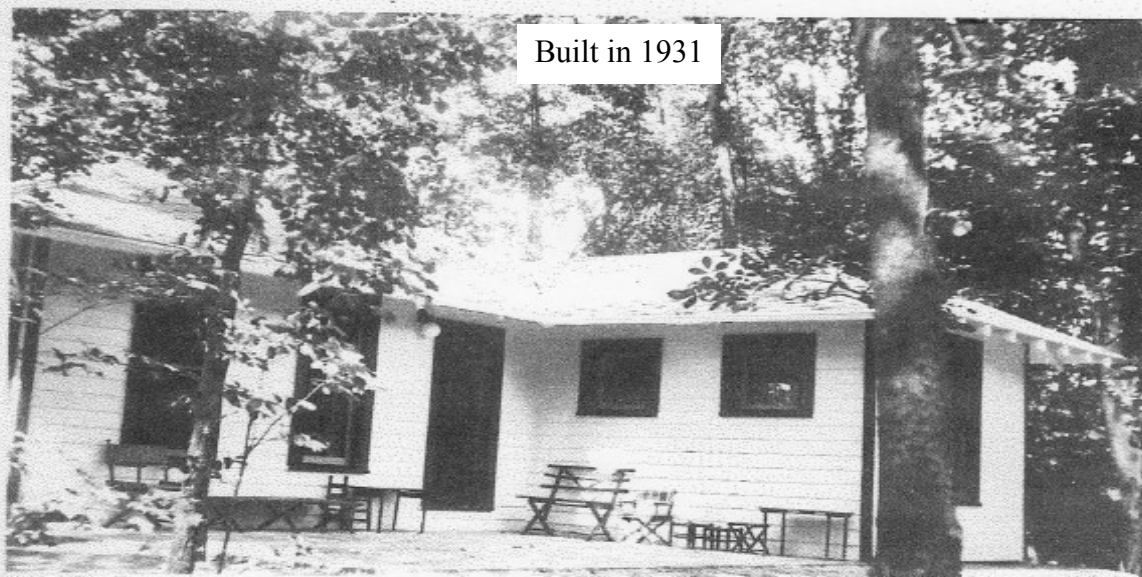
left after a few months and began compulsive, destructive drinking. Eventually, Doherty became a patient at Sacred Heart Hospital in Milwaukee where he spent two years. He was released, but only under the care of an attendant. He returned to Indiana, and took residence at the family's country home, nicknamed "The Tangle." (Pictured Below)



S.E. View

This November 1937, photograph was taken about three years before the historic first A.A. Meeting took place in this house in October 1940. This property included 10 acres of heavily wooded land which bordered 106 th Street and West of Keystone in Carmel, Indiana.

## “The Tangle” Birthplace of Indianapolis AA.



“The “Tangle” as viewed from the Southwest — July 1931



It was written that these workers were illiterate and had no building plans. They had no way of knowing that their creation, only a decade later, would become an historic starting point of recovery for thousands of suffering alcoholics from Indiana, Ohio and Illinois. Doherty’s S. had the first Indianapolis meeting here in October of 1940.



The Tangle included ten acres, facing 106th Street, just west of Keystone Ave.

## Doherty's Struggle for an Alcoholic 'Cure'

"In the spring of 1936, Doherty became ill with a damaged liver and had to stop drinking – his life depended on it, but he could not. Consequently he became a patient at [the] Menninger [Clinic in Topeka, Kansas;] but he left after a few months and began compulsive, destructive drinking. Eventually, Doherty became a patient at Sacred Heart Hospital in Milwaukee, WI. where he spent two years."

From Doherty's niece, Laura

### THE MENNINGER PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL



#### LIVING ROOM

The living rooms are large and quiet, with a home-like atmosphere.



#### MAIN DINING ROOM

The meals are attractive and palatable, conforming to the patients' needs.

#### SHOWER AND SPRAY TREATMENT

The shower and spray treatments are up-to-date in apparatus and methods.



#### IMMERSION TREATMENTS

Hydrotherapy is preferable to drug sedation.

A Private Sanitarium for the treatment of the nervously and mentally sick, according to the most approved modern methods.

Fully equipped for hydrotherapy, (showers, spray, Scotch douche, Sitz bath, prolonged neutral immersions), and electrotherapy.

These treatments are given by a graduate masseuse and physiotherapist.

The matron and supervisor of the nurses plans the attractive meals and palatable dishes served to the patients.

The capacity is small (limited to twenty patients), assuring the personal attention required by nervous patients.

#### MEDICAL STAFF:

C. F. Menninger, M. D.  
Karl A. Menninger, M. D.  
William C. Menninger, M. D.

Associated with the

**THE MENNINGER CLINIC**  
Psychiatry and Neurology  
**TOPEKA, KANSAS**

KANSAS CITY Offices: 854 Arayle Bldg.

*Advertisement for the sanitarium, 1929*



**Sacred Heart Hospital**

Doherty had been dry by the skin of his teeth since 1938, then as Indianapolis Historian, Dean L. B. \_\_\_\_\_, describes, he read a September 1939 Liberty Magazine article entitled, "*Alcoholics and God*", by Morris Markey, from which he learned that a new book, "*Alcoholics Anonymous*" was available (information upon request). Consequently, he wrote the following letter, as follows:

Liberty Magazine,  
122 E. 42nd Street,  
New York, N. Y.

Gentlemen:

In your issue of Sept. 30th appears an article by Morris Markey, "Alcoholics and God", in which he recommends that interested persons secure a copy of a book entitled "Alcoholics Anonymous", published by the Alcoholic Foundation.

I write to inquire how this may be done, and enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope for your convenience in replying.

My interest is personal, not "professional", and I shall be very grateful to you for giving me the information as promptly as may be.

Very truly yours,  
*Walter Doherty*

Mr. Doherty S\_\_\_\_\_,  
4750 Central Ave.,  
Indianapolis, Indiana.

On October 4, 1939 he received this response from Liberty Magazine: "*We are enclosing a mimeographed form letter which explains briefly the background of those people who dub themselves Alcoholics Anonymous, their connection with the Works Publishing Company and the Alcoholic Foundation, and origin of the book; also a pamphlet describing the book and how it can be secured.*" (Excerpt)\*

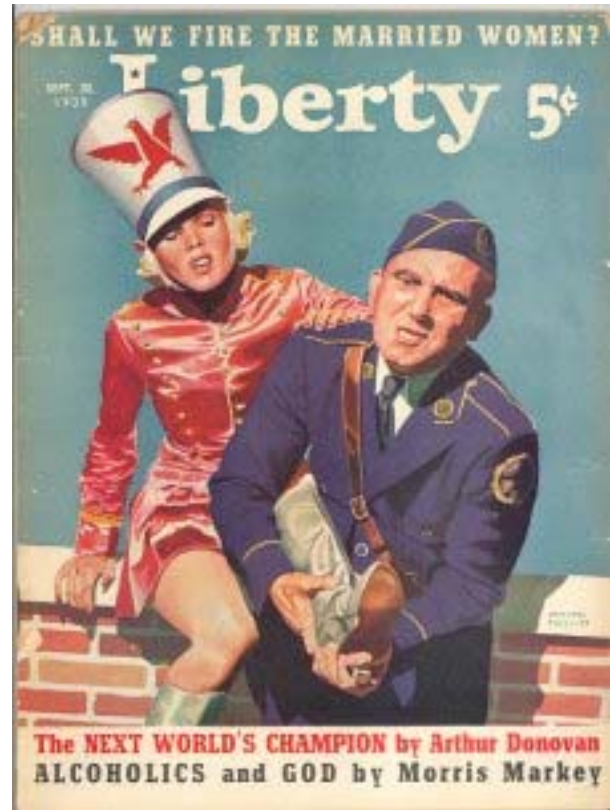
Then, on April 29<sup>th</sup>, 1940, Doherty Received a letter from Bill W. \_\_\_\_\_'s secretary, Ruth H\_\_\_\_\_, in which she mentioned a small pamphlet that briefly explained the AA program was available, and that AA had grown to 500 members. The cover of this pamphlet is shown on page 22.

\*These original documents can be viewed at the Indianapolis Central Office Archives.



Fulton Oursler was a magazine editor, religious author, and Hollywood screenwriter, and was an early Oxford Group member and friend to AA. He passed away in the year 1952. His official relationship with AA is as follows: Sept. 30, 1939, the very popular weekly Liberty Magazine, headed by Fulton Oursler, carried a piece titled *Alcoholics and God*, by Morris Markey (who was influenced to write the article by Charles Towns). It generated about 800 inquiries from around the nation. Oursler (author of *The Greatest Story Ever Told*) became good friends with Bill W and later served as a Trustee and member of the Grapevine editorial board. In Oct. 1949, Dr. William D. Silkworth and Fulton Oursler joined the Alcoholic Foundation Board.)

From *NEWSVINE* - a book review periodical.



Indianapolis AA membership was among the communities to experience growth in the wake of this article.

In March 1941, the Saturday Evening Post featured an excellent article about A.A., and the response was enormous. By the close of that year, the membership had jumped to 6,000, and the number of groups multiplied in proportion. Spreading across the U.S. and Canada, the Fellowship mushroomed.

By 1950, 100,000 recovered alcoholics could be found worldwide, and Indianapolis membership exceeded 500 in that year – just ten years after the first meeting. (From Group Records of the GSO Archives).



# Indianapolis AA Beginnings

What further communication took place between Doherty and the Alcoholic Foundation is not known, but another sort of response arrived in the form of this short 250 pound *venetian-blind* traveling salesman, who bluntly introduced himself: "I am from Cleveland and I've come here to help you get to work." This connection took place in September 1940. This was a member who was sponsored by well known early A.A. Cleveland founder, Clarence S\_\_\_\_\_. His name was Irwin M\_\_\_\_\_, nicknamed 'Irv,' who attended the Borton Group when in Cleveland, *and sober*. (See picture at right)



**Borton Group**

2427 Roxboro Dr., Cleveland Hts., OH.

Although Irv was a frequent slipper, he was enthusiastic about 12th Stepping when he was sober. Despite his regular leaps off the AA wagon, he appears to have been financially successful by the appearance of this nice house in an upscale neighborhood. (Pictured below)



**Irv M\_\_\_\_ Residence**

1686 Eddington Rd., Cleveland Hts.

This first action of this 'work' was making a 160 mile drive south to Evansville, where J.D. H\_\_\_\_\_ had started Indiana's *first* A.A. meeting only several months previous, on April 23, 1940. Another Indianapolis alcoholic, Mr. B\_\_\_\_, accompanied Irv and Doherty on this venture. J.D. had gained his sobriety in Akron with the early A.A. members in September of 1936. He was counted as A.A. # 8, after Bill W. and Dr. Bob.

The 1940 City Directory address for James D. and Rhoda H\_\_\_\_\_ as 420 South Denby Street. (Picture below) According to a letter written to A.A. by Mrs. H\_\_\_\_\_, the Evansville Group had 24 members in September of 1940. [From a 2007 Archives report by Bob E.] The three visitors must have been quite impressed by the size of this distant and solitary Tuesday night meeting!

J.D. H\_\_\_\_\_ traveled professionally and was an avid 12-Stepper; He stated: "*I used to carry three or four Big Books in my car. If they didn't have any books at a particular group I would give them one, or some pamphlets.*" He would drive miles out of his way to visit a man whose name he received from the New York Office. As years passed, he would often take a train up to Indianapolis on Saturdays, to attend the Indianapolis Sunday Morning 9:00 a.m., Breakfast Meeting at the Hotel Riley. (Dr Bob & the Good Old Timers, page 258)



**J.D. H\_\_\_\_\_ Residence**

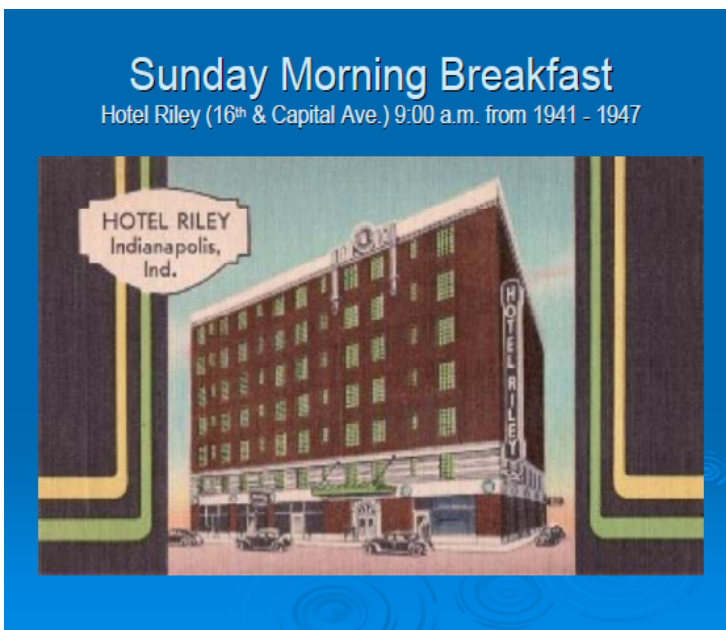
420 South Denby, Evansville, IN

## The Indianapolis Hotel Breakfast Era

Irwin M\_\_\_\_\_, started many meetings through the south, he later moved to the west coast; little more is known about Irwin at this time. J.D. H\_\_\_\_\_ continued to help start new meetings until his demise at Akron on May 27, 1961; he was 66 years old and 24 years sober. The Indiana AA founder, J.D. always gave credit to Doherty for “putting Indiana on the AA map.

”The Indianapolis Fellowship had grown to seventeen members by the following spring and by that summer (1941), to forty! But not all the attendees were from Indy—J.D. H\_\_\_\_\_ would take a train up from Evansville and people started coming from points far and near. As Bill W\_\_\_\_\_ might say, “The goose hung high!” Eventually, AAs from Richmond, Ft. Wayne, Anderson, Muncie, and all around Indiana, were dutifully making their weekly Sunday morning trudge to the Sunday Morning Breakfast Meeting in the beautiful **Riley Hotel**. The Indianapolis AA Breakfast Meeting era had begun!

This era was to last for more than twenty-six years, from 1941 through 1967, and even longer if the Breakfast meetings at the Essex Motel are to be counted



“In our history,  
lies our hope!”

This article was on the bottom center of the first page, of the Palladium-Item and Sun-Telegram, Richmond, Indiana, on March 24 - 25, 1941. This article is also in the Archives collection of news clippings, at GSO in New York City.

PALLADIUM-ITEM AND SUN-TELEGRAM, MONDAY, MARCH 24, 1941

### Want To Break Drinking Habit?

Alcoholics Anonymous is an informal society of ex-alcoholics who aim to help fellow problem drinkers recover their health. The fellowship, recently organized, is spreading throughout the country. Indianapolis has a chapter of 17 members.

One of the Indianapolis members is in Richmond in connection with a business enterprise. He will gladly convey the method of recovery to alcoholics who are interested in dropping the habit. Persons who are interested can obtain his name from The Palladium-Item.

There are no fees in connection with membership in the chapter. No drugs are used; no vows are taken; no member is obligated to conform to certain opinions and views.

The Alcoholic Foundation of New York is the national headquarters. Inquiries to it will be answered if addressed to Post Office Box 656, Church Street Annex, New York City.

17  
members

**Alcoholics Anonymous.  
Membership Grows.  
Proud Of Cures.  
Talk Same Language.  
Half Stay On Wagon.**

Indianapolis, July 28.

**M**ANY Hoosters now on the road to seeing pink elephants soon will be members of a flourishing informal organization which styles itself Alcoholics Anonymous. Only one tie binds the men and women in this fellowship. It is their common experience of definitely having been on the road to ruin through the alcohol route.

**TWO HUNDRED** eleven days ago—on New Year's eve—five Indianapolis men who had cured themselves through accepting the Alcoholics Anonymous philosophy were given their first and only press publicity in a feature story in the Indianapolis Star.

**TODAY THEY** have forty members in the group which holds weekly Sunday Breakfasts at a north side hotel. In Octo-

Richmond member Tom R\_\_\_ (DOS 1951), from Greenville, Ohio, stated that the Sunday Breakfast Meeting excursions were considered almost as an audience with the Pope! The only meetings in Richmond were on Sundays and Wednesdays, so Sunday would have been a double feature for those inclined to make said quasi-pilgrimage.

J.D. H\_\_\_\_\_ spoke of how Doherty would get a lone wolf from one town together with another for the Sunday Breakfast Meeting. Of course, this must have prompted many new meetings around Indiana. AA lore has it that two Richmond, Indiana, businessmen were surprised to discover each other at the breakfast—they later, became home town founding members in 1946.

Ft. Wayne, alcoholic, C.L. B\_\_\_\_\_, was having no success getting a meeting started, till he convinced three others into going to the Indianapolis Breakfast Meeting on Pearl Harbor Day (December 7, 1941). This apparently broke the ice, because soon afterward a new AA meeting was established in that northeastern Indiana city.



A Sunday Breakfast Meeting for the Antlers Hotel at 9:00 am was listed in the 1947 Meeting Directory. Also, it appears that the Riley Hotel Breakfast era lasted from 1941 to 1948.

This Meeting Directory has been reproduced by the editor for the sake of clarity. The exact date is not known, but factual evidence dates it later than 1948. The red bolded print is to illustrate the two concurrent Hotel Breakfast Meetings. Some descriptions have been deleted.

#### Sunday

Morning Breakfast Meeting **Warren Hotel** 9:00 am  
 Morning Breakfast Meeting, **Riley Hotel** 9:00 am  
 Northeast Group Broad Ripple 8:30 pm  
 Progressive Group 124 Georgia 4:00 pm

#### Monday

Women's Group 124 W. Georgia St 8:00 pm  
 Meyerson Instruction 1341 N. Alabama 8:00 pm  
 Beacon Group 3000 W. Washington 7:30 pm  
 (Central State Hospital)  
 East Side Group (not readable) 8:00 pm

#### Tuesday

Review Group 16th & Central (Parish H.) 8:30 pm  
 Speedway Group 18th & Centennial 8:30 pm  
 South Side Group 930 Prospect Ave. 8:00 pm  
 Disc. Group 1341 N. Alabama 8:00 pm  
 (Indiana Home)  
 Broad Ripple GP. Call ME 4-1708, or ME 4-0826

#### Wednesday

20-40 Group 124 W. Georgia 8:00 pm  
 West Side Group Miley & W. Wash. 8.30 pm  
 Broad Ripple Group. ME 4-1708, or ME 4-0826

#### Thursday

North Side Group 38th & Meridian 8:00 pm  
 Larue Carter Hosp. meeting 8:00 pm  
 Larue Carter Memorial Hospital

#### Friday

Home Group 21 W. 38th Street 8:00 pm  
 (Merchants Bank)  
 Irvington Group 8:30 pm  
 East Washington & Audibon Street  
 Union Federal bank (rear)

#### Saturday

Meyerson Group 1341 N. Alabama 8:00 pm  
 (Men Only, Indiana Home)  
 Open Meeting, 124 W. Georgia St. 8:30 pm

George L., from Anderson, Indiana, was residing in the Ben Hur Sanitarium, in Beech Grove—a suburb of Indianapolis, when he received a visit from AA members Doherty S\_\_\_\_\_ and Harry M. George then attended his first AA meeting at the Riley Hotel. After leaving the sanitarium he moved home to Fowler, Indiana. He stayed sober by continuing attendance to the Riley Breakfast Meeting, once a month, and stayed sober by letters of encouragement from his sponsors. He and his wife moved to his home in Anderson by November 1943. (George had obtained a job at Delco - Remy.) He continued to phone Doherty and visit patients at the Indiana Home alcoholic ward. In February of 1947 he helped start Anderson's first meeting.

A breakfast meeting took place in the Victory Room of the beautiful Grand Hotel (Pictured below) located at 138 Illinois Street, Indianapolis. This event took place on Sunday, Feb.18, 1948. (It would seem likely that this was a one-time affair. From the Anderson Group Ledger.)



This was doubtless a pretty fancy shindig! Charlie M\_\_\_\_\_ (DOS 1950) lamented on the 'dress code' of those early days. In a 1992 recording, at the State Avenue Group, he told how that all the speakers during the early 1950s would "never, ever" do so without wearing a coat and tie. One could be assured that, in those days, that the same protocol would be in effect when visiting patients in the alcoholic wards of the Indiana Home or other such institutions. AA was new and most agreed that it needed to be presented in the best light! (Look up early Akron pictures)

But this was about to change during this period. Charlie M\_\_\_\_\_ reminisces on how AA member, Park B\_\_\_\_\_, came to a meeting not wearing a coat. When criticized, Park started his own meeting and called it the A-Z-UR Group, meaning come dressed anyway you choose. Charlie claimed this caused "all H \_\_\_\_\_ to break lose!" Charlie was wearing a Coat & Tie during this talk at the State Avenue Group, forty years later.

Charlie was only 33 years old in 1950. He described himself as ‘raw meat’ for the older AA sponsors who were anxious that he would *make* the program. He relates how after the regular AA meetings, which were often held at Doherty S\_\_\_\_’s “Tanglewood House,” he was driven to Dr. B\_\_\_\_’s home for “coffee.” Charlie began to notice that en route home the bars were always closed—then, he caught on to their ploy! So, the next evening, before the meeting, he hid a pint of whiskey in the bushes of his house which, of course, he guzzled down soon after arriving home.

Then, at 3:00 am, he phoned every one of those ‘tricksters’ and laughingly stated: “Ha! Ha! Ha! You didn’t keep me sober tonight.”

Charlie sobered up for good and all on June 21, 1950, but he never lost his sense of humor. Some years later he told a group of Al-Anon ladies: “If it wasn’t for us alcoholics, you wouldn’t be here!”

Throughout his early sobriety, his Al-Anon wife, Helen, was always very supportive and often waited in the car during the meetings which might be noted as a thoughtful protective measure.

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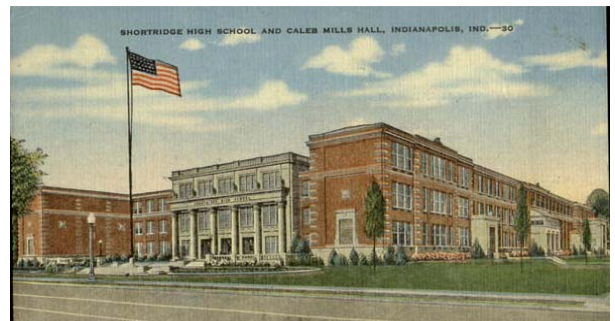
### A notable event

Charlie relates that Bill W\_\_\_\_ was to present an AA talk at Shortridge High School on June 5th, 1951, but interestingly enough he decided to do a preparatory talk at a local hotel, because Bill feared his eastern accent might not be well understood by mid-western speaking Hoosiers. Charlie met Bill during this session which began a life-long friendship.

Dr. B\_\_\_\_’s wife, Helen, tells that after the main talk at the High School, Bob W\_\_\_\_, Indiana’s first AA Delegate, invited Bill and about fifteen attendees to his house for coffee and fellowship. But when the word spread, his house was soon filled with AAs and Al-Anons alike (Al-Anon may not have yet been given that title at the time). But Bill lectured them on the importance of living the same 12 Steps as their husbands. Helen said that they were already doing this. One time during the early 1950s, Tom R\_\_\_\_, from Greenville, Ohio, drove all the way to



Indianapolis for counsel with the well known Dr. B\_\_\_\_, but the Doctor told Tom: ‘You go right back home and bring “that little lady” back with you—this is a family disease!’



**Shortridge High School**

# 1947 Indianapolis Newspapers report on Alcoholics Anonymous

## Alcoholics Anonymous Aid Sincere Among Drunkards

By HELEN FERGUSON AND NELSON W. NEAL

United Press Staff Correspondents  
One of Indiana's most successful and popular advertising executives sat across the table from us, explaining the personal philosophy that pulled him from what he called "the depths of the gutter" to the responsible position he now holds.

The 60-year-old gentleman with the sparkling eyes and the crisp sense of humor was the secretary of the largest of Indiana's 25 chapters of Alcoholics Anonymous.

At the dinner table he explained that Indiana's underground force of more than 1,500 A.A. members number almost as many women as it does men.

"THERE ISN'T A member of Alcoholics Anonymous in Indiana or anywhere else in America who at one time or another hasn't lost almost complete control of his life," he said. "But there are thousands who have regained their self-control, self-respect and the respect of their families and communities merely by applying our simple form of psychology."

Indiana's A.A.s operate on the theory that once a person realizes that he has a number of friends pulling for him and giving him the courage he needs to throw off chronic alcoholism, he will think twice before letting them down.

Later we met and talked with some 40 former chronic alcoholics who said they now live normal, happy lives. Many said they no longer have any desire for liquor. Others were fighting.

A silver-haired motherly old lady was in charge of a club party and hayride. A pretty, but nervous, young woman was chairman. She said she was driven to drink by a lack of self-confidence.

"DRINKING GAVE me a false sense of courage," the attractive brunette said. "I joined Alcoholics Anonymous a few months ago to get back on my feet the fighting way. They made me chairman to help me regain poise and self-control before a crowd of people."

A pretty, young blond, who had taken her last drink seven months

ago, said she desperately wanted a tall, cool bourbon and coke.

"But I don't dare," she said. "That's the way I got started the last time. My program calls for giving up one drink every day—the first one."

"Here you see what A.A. is fighting for," our host said. "Our only weapon is will power. Drugs and sanitariums are out of our line."

Members who have maintained a strict record of sobriety over long periods of time remain with the club. They sponsor new members, taking them in hand as personal friends.

"It takes an alcoholic to understand an alcoholic," the Indianapolis secretary said. "In a year or so maybe the shaky newcomer will earn a sponsor's medal and with it the responsibility of helping others like him to a higher level."

INDIANAPOLIS has four such A.A. clubs, one of them with 350 members. Fort Wayne has three chapters; Warsaw has two.

In seven years new clubs have mushroomed in Muncie, Columbus, Edinburg, Gary, La Porte, Logansport, Plymouth, South Bend, Terre Haute, Marion and many other cities and towns.

"Alcoholism is a disease of the mind and has to be treated by the mind," said the personable advertising executive. "It can't be overcome unless the alcoholic first frankly admits to himself and to others that he's a drunk."

"We don't go out after him. If he's sincere, he'll come to us. Whatever he does up to the time he joins A.A. is his business. After that, it's ours."

## 'Alcoholics Anonymous' Have Merry, Sober New Year Party

Nearly 500 Alcoholics Anonymous celebrated the New Year

Tuesday night at the South Grove Country Club but there wasn't a whiff of bottled spirits in the place.

Men and women whose dread of whisky is based on experience with the disease of alcoholism toasted the New Year with soft drinks or coffee. The hilarity which resounded at midnight belied any argument that festivities without John Barleycorn's presence are doomed.

Alcoholics Anonymous, an organization with a program of self-discipline designed to rehabilitate the individual whose alcoholic condition has become a disease, brought their spouses, children and friends.

The organization began here with a membership of one seven years ago. It now has 550 adherents. They seek "the serenity to accept things we can not change, courage to change that which we

can, and wisdom to know the difference."

Bankers, clerks, plumbers and laborers rubbed shoulders and danced out the old year. When the new year came in the roar might have sobered people who had partaken of stronger drink.

When the party ended every one was on his feet. The boast of the sponsoring committee was proved true. Every one was able to "really SEE the New Year in."

## Indianapolis News reports

Jan. 1, 1947

### AA Population Growth of Indianapolis (GSO Report)

1940 - 5

1941 - 60 (in December)

1942 - 50

1943 - 60 ??

1944 - 75

1945 - 200

1946 - 300

1947 - 400

1948 - 500

1952 - 600

Indianapolis  
News Report  
June 10, 1947

## Getting in touch with AA

The first *discovered* newspaper notice of a convenient AA connection was in the Indianapolis Star on July 29, 1941. It told of a **PO Box number 1474**. This was over seven months after the first Indianapolis meeting started, so it is possible that there was an earlier notice. The Hotel Breakfast meetings had started at the Riley Hotel and a July 29 newspaper article accessed AA's membership as 40 members (See page 10)

In January 1943, the Telephone Answering Service 24/7 begins. By April 1, 1943 the Indianapolis Star 'Personal Notices' listed the same PO Box number, plus a **telephone number! MA. 5392**.

In May 1944 the Cleveland Central Bulletin listed another phone number: **FR 2743**, as the number to contact A.A. This was the same number listed in 1945, which was the year the **Indiana Home** opened.

The 1947, Indiana Meeting Directory listed **FR 2743** with the **P.O. Box # 1474** for AA. The Directory was printed by **The Retreat** that was located at 41 West 32 nd Street. Its telephone number **TA 3021**.

In 1948 the **FR 2743** number was listed in connection with the **Alanon Club** (Maybe it was spelled **Al-Anon** in those days, as it is now) which became the acting Central Office at 124 W. Georgia Street.

In 1953 the same number was used in connection with the new **Indiana Home** location at 2054 N. Delaware Ave.

In 1955 (approx.) this same **FR 2743** number was used for the new Alanon Club location at 2209 Central Avenue.

It is not yet discovered whether this same number was used in 1958 when the Central Office moved to 136 E. Market Street.

Eight years after the first Indianapolis AA meeting the first ongoing center of operations began to develop in the downtown area near the Union Station, as the following article describes:

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### Indiana AAs Open Club

(Alanon Club, 124 W. Georgia Street)

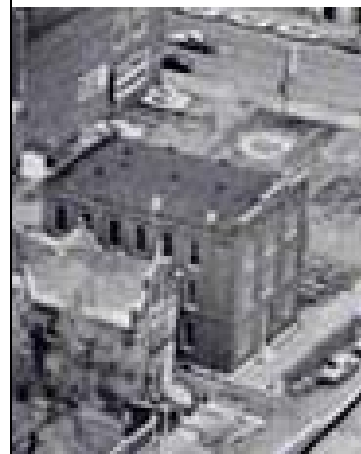
A three story brick building is now the new Alanon Club of Indianapolis. The clubhouse is complete with a large room for dancing, lounges and coffee and sandwich bar equipped with a brass rail so that the members will feel at home. The opening was attended by approximately 500 members and friends. The clubrooms are open at all times and groups from all parts of the city hold meetings there. (Excerpt from a July 1948 Grapevine article) [The Alanon Club opened April 3, 1948]

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The **Alanon Club** served as a recovery social center, AA meeting location and Center for AA business activities, including a telephone service. It was supported by AA meetings around the state and was known simply as the Alanon Club. It was one of the first AA Intergroup Offices in the United States.

This building was razed and is now a parking garage. For the sake of location a photo of the Parish House, which is the next building west, across the alleyway, is illustrated on page 16.

*The Three story building on the right was the Alanon Club and Central Office location, 124 Georgia Street. (Operative from 1948 to approx. 1955.)*



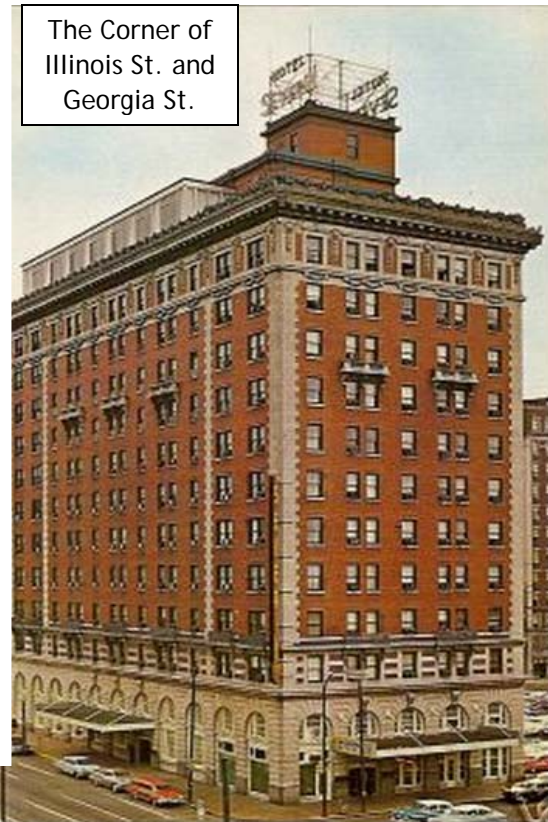


St. John the Evangelist Catholic Church  
Capitol Avenue at Georgia Street

Parking garage where the  
Alanon Club was located:  
124 West Georgia St.



The Corner of  
Illinois St. and  
Georgia St.



AA Members, Tom R\_\_\_, from Ohio, and  
Bob W, from Batesville, IN, recall  
attending Sunday Morning Breakfast  
Meetings in the Severin Hotel during the  
late 1950s.



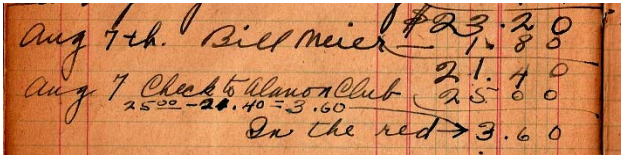
**St. John Parish House**  
at 126 Georgia Street (the Alanon Club  
was next door east of this building).

## Alanon Club/Central Office

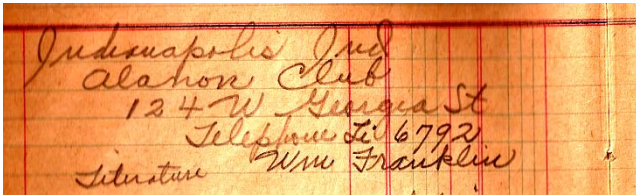
(124 W. Georgia Street)

As previously stated, the Alanon Club/Central Office took residence at 124 W. Georgia Street on April 3, 1948, with Harry L., as manager. It became the center of Indianapolis AA social and business activities.

This center was supported from donations from



groups around the state of Indiana. Above is shown a listed donation, in 1949, from the meeting journal of the Richmond Group.



. . . And from pages of same Richmond journal, the Alanon Club phone number was listed: LI 6792 (The date is unclear, but probably 1948).

Indiana's first state Delegates were elected in this building: Robert W\_\_\_, 1951; Fred C\_\_\_, 1953 and Maurice J\_\_\_, 1955.

### Meetings at 124 W. Georgia Street

(late 1940s Or early 1950s)

Progressive Group meeting at 4:00 p.m. on Sunday.  
Women's Group meeting (maybe 8:00 p.m.) on Monday.  
20 - 40 Group meeting at 8:00 p.m. on Wednesday.  
Open Meeting at 8:00 p.m. on Saturday

Few records have been found to illustrate the many important business and social events that took place at this center. It was probably not referred to as an 'Intergroup Office' during this time, but it was the center of most AA business activities, such as the creation of standing committees, phone service and elections.

The Club/Central Office remained at the Georgia Street location for approximately seven years, but Harry G. (DOS Jan. 1958) records that it moved to a new location during 1955 while he was still trying to sober up.

### A New location

(2209 Central Avenue)

Harry G. recalls that the Alanon Club location was in a nicely remodeled older home and continued to serve as both a social club and central office. The caretakers were tagged as Mom and Pop R\_\_\_\_\_.

A 1958 controversy which developed over a particular racial issue caused much dissention and argument. Sue R\_\_\_, the Central Office Secretary, commented that this sort of thing was inappropriate for Alcoholics Anonymous. The result was moving the Central Office to the fourth floor of 136 Market Street, in the heart of downtown Indianapolis (See next page).

Then, some years later, the Alanon Club moved to this beautiful new location:



Presently referred to as the **Carvel Club**

(4627 Carvel Ave.)

The present club manager, Doug B. explains:

"The Carvel Club was founded in 1948 under the name "The Alanon Club, Inc." (two years before Al-Anon came into existence) making it one of the oldest clubs in the world still operating. The current facility at 4627 Carvel was built in 1965 for the sole purpose of providing a new home for the club. Known for years as just "The Club" or "The Northside Club", the name was officially changed to The Carvel Club Inc. on January 28, 2005. Needless to say the history is long and extensive."

## Indianapolis Intergroup Office

(136 E Market Street)



The Intergroup Office has served the AA community from this location for over 50 years. Their offices were first on the fourth floor, then the sixth, and now the tenth floor. They provide services such as, a 12 Step hot line, recovery literature, archives, notice of upcoming events, a newsletter, meeting directories and free coffee. Ph. 317 632-7864

## The Retreat

(41 W. 32nd Street)

One of the early Indianapolis centers for alcoholic treatment was **THE RETREAT**. The present location of this building is now a parking lot, but during the late 1940s this must have been a busy haven for recovering alcoholics.

Established in July of 1946, his facility treated *both* men and women, which was not common practice during those times.

A vintage advertisement for "THE RETREAT". At the top, the word "ALCOHOLISM" is written in a stylized font inside a banner. Below this, the text reads: "A DIGNIFIED HOME FOR THE EXCLUSIVE TREATMENT OF ALCOHOLISM". A paragraph follows: "This institution known as 'The Retreat' is exactly what the name implies, a retreat for the person who has the problem of alcoholism. Here medical skill, human understanding and sympathy will be given the patient—as well as the family." At the bottom, it says "THE RETREAT", "41 West 32nd, Indianapolis, Ind.", and "TAlbot 3021".



The Indianapolis Meeting Directory listed a Wednesday night AA meeting called the "12<sup>th</sup> Step Group" in this facility at 8:00 pm. An advertisement read, "Out of town AAs are invited to attend Wednesday night meetings of the '12<sup>th</sup> Step Group' at THE RETREAT, 41W. 32nd St."

The Cleveland Central Bulletin, April 1945 Issue stated: "From our good friend, Jim B. of Indianapolis comes the pleasing information that on the first of April, he and Dr. John N\_\_\_\_ opened a nursing home for the treatment of alcoholics. The Hospital is called Indiana Home."

## The Indiana Home

1341 N. Alabama Street



Indiana's latest AA venture, a clinic for alcoholics, also appears to be headed for success. The newly instituted Indiana Home [...] with an 18 bed capacity, had six patients during its first week of operation. Managed by AA, gives not only alcoholics a six day treatment, but, like the Knickerbocker Hospital in New York, serves as a focal point for AA members to do 12 Step work via visits to the patients who are being relieved of the jitters and interesting them in the philosophy of AA.

From a June 1945 Grapevine Article  
(retyped for clarity)

It should be noted that Doherty S\_\_\_\_\_ was an enthusiastic and active participant in the creation of the Indiana Home in the mid-1940s.

Charlie M. spoke of his treatment at the Indiana Home where he was tapered-off with whiskey and then with Paraldehyde, which knocked him out for nearly three days. Charlie only weighed 115 lbs at that time.

Here is an excerpt from a 1951 newspaper article on the Indiana Home by Freemont Powers about another patient:

When an attendant opened the door of the room where Bill lay, an unavoidable odor rolled out, compounded it seemed, of ether and alcohol. It was paraldehyde, a colorless liquid with great hypnotic powers. Bill had been given a bit of this in a glass to drink and it had quickly knocked him out. "Oh, he's fallen out of bed," the attendant said. Two others came in, and, with one at his feet, another at his head and one at the middle, they hauled him back up into bed. Subsequently, it was learned that Bill hadn't rolled out of bed. He had made his way to the bathroom but on returning, had grown so woozy and tired, he just lay down on the floor.

Another excerpt tells us:

"When the property at 1341 N. Alabama, which already had been an Alcoholics Anonymous institution, became for sale in 1946, these AA members, acting as a corporation, purchased the property with the proceeds of a state-wide solicitation of their associates.

These men then surrendered their shares for reorganization whereby any apparent connection between AA as such and ownership of the establishment, would be dissolved.

This was according to the tenets of AA which hold that it should not have property or money or engage in politics."

And further:

"In order that all commercial aspects be removed from the home, the incorporation articles provide that in the event of dissolution, all assets will go to the state of Indiana."

This Center remained active at 1341 N. Alabama for about 13 years, but after a

destructive fire, it moved to 2054 N. Delaware Street by 1958.



**Indiana Home #2**  
(2054 N. Delaware Street)

"It was into this scenario that the seeds of the present day Fairbanks Hospital were planted. These men's work formed the Indiana Home, a 12-bed men's detoxification unit. The program began in a house in downtown Indianapolis, 1341 North Alabama Street, and moved several places before finally settling at 2054 North Delaware St., Indianapolis, Indiana.

A community-wide fundraising effort worked toward a new, larger facility in the late 1960's, that could provide services for men and women. A \$250,000 grant from the Cornelia Cole Fairbanks Trust Fund, along with many other donations large and small, gave birth to the new Fairbanks Hospital at 1575 Northwestern Ave. in May of 1970. By 1982, Fairbanks opened its doors to a new 96 bed facility, at its present location, 8102 Clearvista Parkway, Indianapolis." (Fairbanks Archives)



**Fairbanks Hospital**  
1575 Northwestern

## Recovery Clubs

The *Alanon Club* at 124 Georgia Street began April 3, 1948 and maintained its identity to this day, although it is now legally titled the Carvel Club.

The *Alanew Club* was located in a building on New York Street, just east of Alabama Street, but it lasted only a short time -- this was during the late 1950s or the early 1960s.

Later, the *South Side Club* started on Selby Street as a key club. Harry G. tells that the key cost a dollar. Later move to Raymond Street. The current address is 259 E. Raymond Street.

The *East Side Club* started a small building on Butler Street, just south of Washington in 1979. It has since move four times and is now located at 441 S. Ritter St.

The *West Side Club* has moved numerous times over the last thirty years but is now located at 4939 W. Washington St.

## Medallions



This is a one-year medallion presented to Tom R\_\_\_\_ in 1952 for one-year sobriety (Richmond, Indiana)

Doherty S\_\_\_\_\_ started the token system in Indianapolis in 1942: a silver rectangular medallion was given for the first year of sobriety with the member's name and date of sobriety on the front, and the sponsor's name on the back. Bruce C, from Muncie, researched that the group paid for this symbol, but the lucky recipient got to reimburse the group treasurer. In *History of Indianapolis AA*, by Neil S., it is written that the only place one would receive their chip, in those early days, was at the Sunday

Morning Hotel Breakfast Meeting.

In later years, poker chips were used to indicate periods of sobriety less than one year.



Later, stamped metallic chips were presented for both monthly and yearly periods of sobriety.



By the early 1990s the more decorative medallions came into style for special occasions:



Indianapolis AA archivist, Neil S. (Fishers, Indiana, indicates in his book that the AA group in Indianapolis was probably the first in the US to hand out chips or tokens. (*History of Indianapolis AA*, by Neil S.)

The same book speaks of Anniversary Banquets, dating at least back to 1958. These were held in various upscale places, such as the Antlers Hotel, the Pilgrim Hotel and the Murat Egyptian Room.

# Early Tokens / Serenity Prayer

Sister Ignatia gave these medallions to newly released alcoholic patients of St. Thomas Hospital in Akron, Ohio.



Clarence S. Coin Token



Richmond, IN  
Group Tom Ross  
One Year Token  
Nov. 6, 1951



This printing of the Serenity Prayer is from an issue of the New York Tribune in 1941.

**Q. Why do A.A. members use tokens, medallions, and chips to mark sobriety? When did that practice start?**

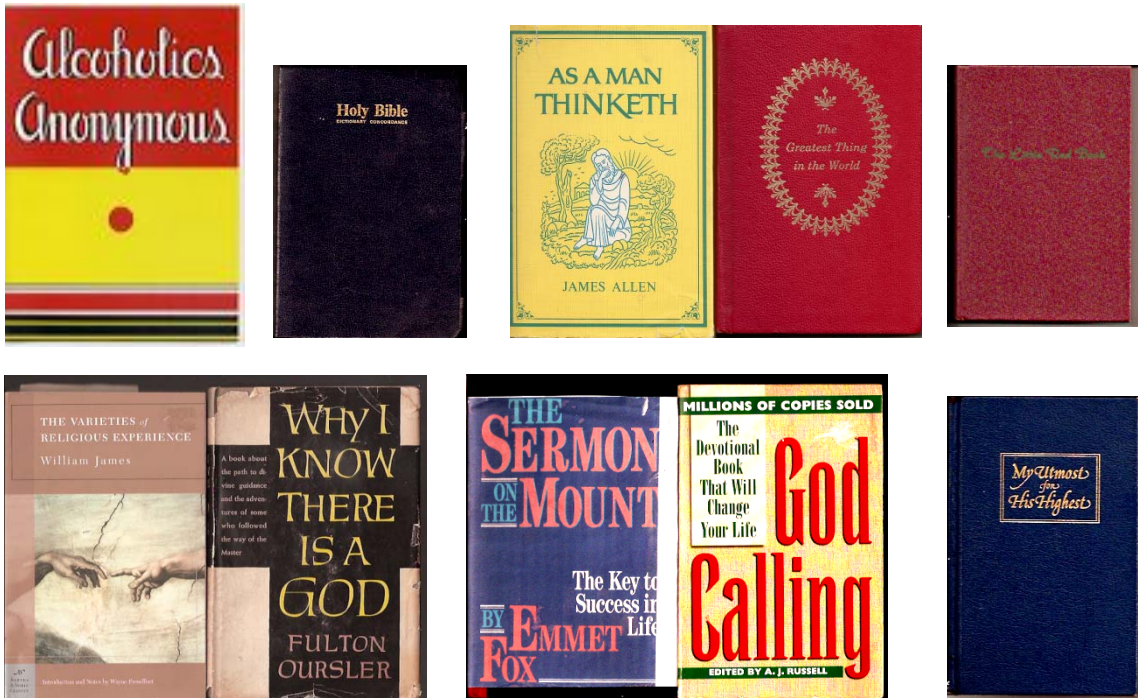
**A.** The chip system is thought to have begun in Indianapolis in 1942. The tradition is believed to have started with Doherty S., who introduced A.A. to Indianapolis and who said in a letter to Bill that the practice originated in that city.

Nell Wing wrote in 1962 about the history of the chip system:

*“The chip system might have begun in Indianapolis.... reference was made in a letter from Doherty to the start of giving out ‘chips’ and ‘tokens.’ This was in 1942. I imagine this would be about right, because most of the early groups started in 1940 and it would take about a couple of years to think of anniversaries and marking any time of sobriety. I asked Bill about this and his memory is that the system started in Indianapolis.”*

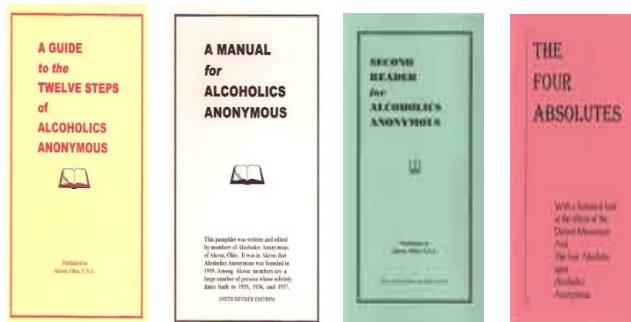
In *Dr. Bob and the Good Oldtimers*, it indicates that Sister Ignatia in Akron, working at St. Thomas Hospital, also used medallions: “Sister Ignatia gave each of her newly released patients a Sacred Heart medallion, which she asked them to return before they took the first drink. She would occasionally give out St. Christopher medals as well.” (Page 195)

We don’t know precisely who started this system, or when and how it spread to other groups. As with many things in A.A., the exact nature of the history eludes us. (From the *Markings* newsletter Spring 2008)

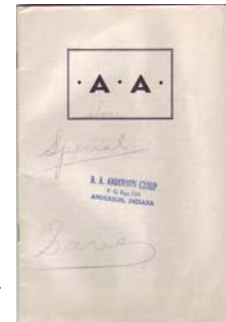
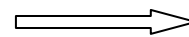


**Books Widely Read by AAs in the Early Years**

Dr. Bob would insist that his "Pigeons" read *Sermon On The Mount*, by Emmet Fox and the *Greatest Thing In The World*, by Henry Drummond. (Dr. Bob & the Good Oldtimers - p. 310)

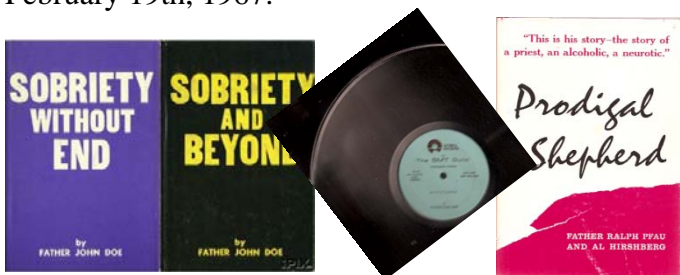


This small pamphlet, explaining the AA program, was widely read in the 1940s.



Fr, Ralph P\_\_\_ came into AA at 39 years old and became one of the most prolific writers and well known speakers in AA of his time. He was also known for the 14 Golden Books. A portion of one of his 33 1/3 records is shown below with his books. He wrote under the name of Fr. John Doe.

Fr. P\_\_\_ was born on November 10, 1904, and died on February 19th, 1967.



**Joan of Arc Catholic Church**, 42nd & Central Avenue, where Fr. P\_\_\_ served as a Priest.

# Alcoholics Anonymous Pamphlet Published by the Indianapolis Groups First made in 1944

## Alcoholics Anonymous

JANUARY 1949

No pledges are given or taken. The A. A. Program is strictly one of "self-imposed" discipline, so mild as to require the utmost in regularity to make it effective, but not nourished by promises.

No attempt is made by members to diagnose either the existence or the extent of addiction in another that is considered each one's individual responsibility.

No dues or fees; the expense of telephone service and P. O. Box rent is met by members' contributions, limited to 25¢, at weekly meetings.

No compulsory attendance, nor Group-imposed discipline, no officers, nor formal organization, nor "files," nor records.

Meetings: 12 meetings of various sections of the group each week; 1 or more every evening—for time and place call FR. 2743. General, all-section meeting is a 9 o'clock breakfast in the Antlers Hotel, Sunday mornings. A. A.'s from other cities welcome.

Contact with the Group (by either mail or telephone) should be made by the individual having the problem. Where this is not possible, and the initial contact is made by another, the Group avoids any continuing "progress reports" to family or friends of members.

Anonymity is carefully preserved, not as a cloak of concealment for members, but because experience has shown it necessary to a successful approach to prospective members. Equal care is taken to preserve the anonymity of inquirers. Any mailed replies to inquiries are enclosed in plain envelopes. No records are kept.

Members, once started on the Program, are proud, alike, of their effort and their associates in it. Time and abstinence tend to increase this feeling.

### WHAT IS ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

There is nothing occult or mysterious about Alcoholics Anonymous. They avoid 1 drink (the 1st one) one day at a time.

Man in his extremity has ever turned to God. This is the alcoholic's situation, facing as he does, the mental and physical anguish of the recurring hang-over and the grave danger of loss of reason—even death.

But with Alcoholics Anonymous the turning to God is an individual and voluntary thing, and God is as each individual may understand Him. The movement, Alcoholics Anonymous, is not a sect, or cult, or ism. And does not conflict in any way with accustomed religious beliefs and practices. These are never even discussed among us.

It is not an "organization" in the ordinary sense, because it has no constitution, by-laws, officers or fixed meeting place.

It is a close-knit Group of individual alcoholics who wish to spread their knowledge of alcoholism because in doing so they, themselves, stay sober. This is the experience of some 90,000 to 100,000 recovering alcoholics.

The "A. A." Program is in twelve steps. The weekly meetings are not The Program—they are merely a part of the performance of the 12th Step.

Experience is both abundant and convincing that adherence to the 12-step program is rewarded with complete sobriety, but adherence must be voluntary. There is no record anywhere of an alcoholic recovering from addiction to alcohol against his will.

There is, therefore, no effort on the part of Alcoholics Anonymous to "sell" this Program. It is entirely a program of self discipline, and no one is entitled to expect more from the

Members of Alcoholics Anonymous do not believe there is (in the present state of knowledge) a cure for alcoholism—a cure in the sense that an alcoholic can ever hope to be a "social drinker" again—but they know it is possible to be a non-drinking alcoholic and live a normal, useful life.

Families of prospective members are often apprehensive about calling in total strangers in what has almost always become a "touchy" situation. For their reassurance be it stated the words Alcoholic and Drunkard are not synonymous. A non-drinking alcoholic is as trustworthy as any other non-drinking person—and much more understanding of the complexities arising from drink.

There is not a "thin dime" of money in this undertaking for anybody. It is well to remember that.

It is well to remember, too, that the prospect (at the time of the initial call) is usually no "rose geranium." A little humility, all around, is a very effective antidote for humiliation.

This is a general statement for general distribution. It does not imply a personal interest on the part of anyone receiving it.

But it could save a life.

We know of A. A.'s (some in Groups) in these other Indiana towns; upon request, we will ask them to contact any inquirer in their vicinity . . . usually they are glad to: Anderson, Angola, Bedford, Bloomington, Connersville, Columbus, Crawfordsville, Danville, Dale, East Chicago, Elkhart, Evansville, Ft. Wayne, Franklin, Goshen, Greenfield, Hammond, Huron, Jasper, Jeffersonville, Kendallville, Kokomo, LaFayette, LaPorte, Logansport, Marion, Mishawaka, Mitchell, Muncie, New Albany, New Castle, Noblesville, North Webster, Oakland City, Richmond, Seymour, Shelbyville, South Bend, Spencer, Terre Haute, Vincennes, Wabash and Warsaw.

Group than honest information about the application of such self-discipline and what it has already accomplished for those who apply it with a sincere desire to recover.

Experience is very definite that alcoholics do not recover "by proxy," and that no amount of wishful thinking has ever substituted for work in this workaday world.

Indianapolis Group of Alcoholics Anonymous  
P. O. Box 1474 Phone FR. 2743

Purpose: To be a dependable source of information on recovery from alcoholism. To make the information as broadly available as possible to men who have an alcoholic problem and seek a solution. To lend encouragement and confidence to those seeking a way out of what seems to them a hopeless mess. To give them the benefit of association with many who are following the Program successfully. To keep sober, ourselves, by doing these things.

Progress: At this writing (Sept. 1947) the group is 7 years old, has about 500 members, of whom more than 200 have been total abstainers from 1 to 7 years.

Not associated with any religious group.

No medical advice given by members.

No exhortation practiced.

Not in any sense a "reform" movement—no quarrel with liquor, nor with those who sell it, nor with those who drink it.

The A. A. Program is a step-by-step statement of the actual experience of sixty thousand persons who have used it successfully during the past ten years. It was developed by the "trial and error" method by men determined to free themselves of an addiction to a drug. It operates JUST ONE DAY AT A TIME.

THE KEYNOTE OF THE A. A. PROGRAM IS "ACTION"—OUR OWN.

RECOVERY COMES THRU "DOING SOMETHING ABOUT IT"—OURSELVES

### THE TWELVE STEPS THAT CONSTITUTE THE A. A. PROGRAM

1. We admitted we are powerless over alcohol—that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it.
11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics and practice these principles in all our affairs.



(This excerpt was retyped for clarity)

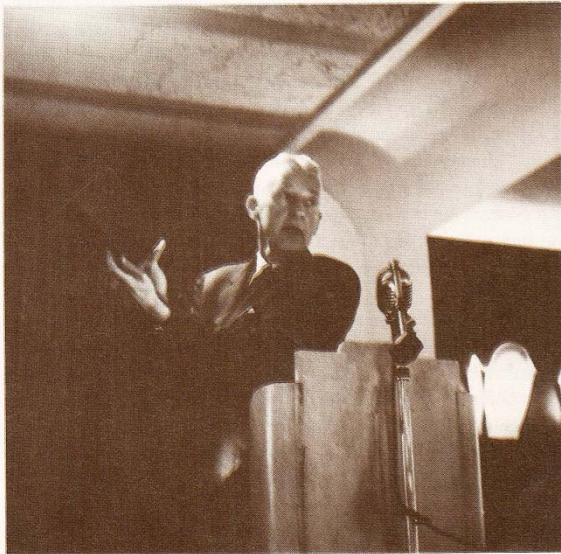
**The Indianapolis Star Reports on  
First Public Meeting of Alcoholics  
Anonymous**

More than 100 men and women listened with rapt attention to an unidentified speaker in the Cropsey Auditorium of the Public Library last night.

They were attending the first public meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous, an organization composed of former dipsomaniacs who have conquered their mania and are devoted their efforts to help others.

Only person "with a name" in the hall was W. Rowland Allen who consented to introduce the speaker. The speaker is a prominent Akron, Ohio, businessman . . .

**Sunday, October 26, 1941**  
(A review of Dr. Bob's presentation)



*The featured speaker wherever he went, Bill nearly always told his own story to an eager and tireless audience.*

From the book "PASS IT ON", page 257



The dates of these engagements would suggest that these two were on a speaking tour, especially after learning that Bill W\_\_\_\_ spoke in Dayton, Ohio, on November 5<sup>th</sup>, 1941.



**Cropsey Auditorium  
City Library  
914 Pennsylvania Ave**

**Unnamed Man in City to Discuss  
Beginning, Slow  
Growth of Organization**

A tall, thin, angular-faced Vermont World War veteran who wrote a book that has saved 6,000 persons from the curse of drink—obsession of drink, as he puts it—spoke at the Evansville Alcoholics Anonymous club meeting last night.

This man—his name shall remain anonymous along with that of the Akron, O., doctor who aided him in founding the national A. A. organization—outlined the origin of the movement, and the psychology which has made it the only effective cure for alcoholics that has been known in the 20,000 years history of fermented juices for drinking.

**Bill W\_\_\_\_ Speaks at Evansville  
Friday, October 20, 1941**  
Above article from Evansville Courier  
October 20, 1941

## 200 At 5-State A.A. Conference

More than 200 members from five states yesterday were registered at the first Indiana conference of Alcoholics Anonymous in Hotel Lincoln.

Highlight of the opening day's program was a banquet address last night by a nationally-known writer of crime stories, one of a series of speakers throughout the nation who have benefited from A.A. membership.

Mayor Alex M. Clark welcomed members. The meeting will conclude this afternoon.

First Indiana AA  
State Convention  
Indianapolis Star  
May 8 & 9, 1954

HOTEL LINCOLN, INDIANAPOLIS, IND.



## Coffee Carousal

### 300 Alcoholics Anonymous Down 1,500 Cups At Parley

Alcoholics Anonymous yesterday ended its second annual state convention at the Sheraton-Lincoln Hotel and paid a bill for 1,500 cups of coffee consumed by 300 members during the two-day parley.

Twenty AA distaff members from Ohio, Illinois, Michigan and Kentucky attended the meeting with Hoosier men and

women who have eschewed liquor and favor nothing stronger than black coffee.

INDIANA has 1,600 AA members. One of the speakers, a New York woman, who has become nationally-known because of her work in the AA movement, related a graphic and tragic story of her life as an alcoholic.

She said she was born of wealthy Chicago parents, and in the "lush 20s," won a measure of "fame" in her social set for her consumption of whisky in large doses. She wasted away most of her money. Finally, through the advice of a New York physician, she "attained sobriety through the wonderful teachings of Alcoholics Anonymous."

Other speakers included a nationally-known sociologist, and a Baltimore truck driver who has appeared before many AA gatherings from coast to coast.

Yesterday's session coincided with the 20th anniversary of the founding of A.A. in Akron, Ohio.

2nd Indiana  
State A.A.  
Convention  
May 7 & 8,  
1955

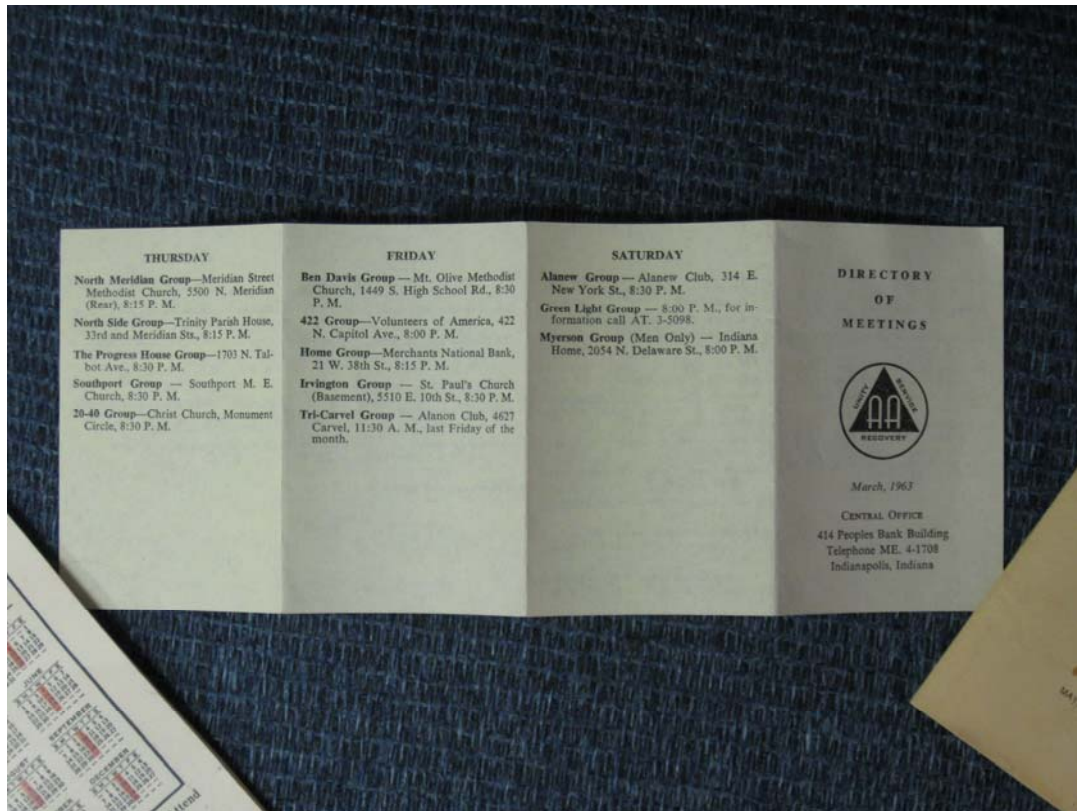
# Indiana & Indianapolis


The start of more groups than can be recorded here, not only in Indiana but elsewhere, was due to the extensive and prolonged efforts of Mr. S. Included are those with an original impetus from the Indiana Home, an Indianapolis non-profit hospital for male alcoholics, in which he had a deep interest and where A.A. influence is still strong. Dohr was instrumental in forming the Indiana Home. This is the forerunner to Fairbanks, now a facility on the campus of Community Hospital North.

Significantly Dorherty S's Indiana Home preceded the world renowned Hazelden Facility in Minnesota.

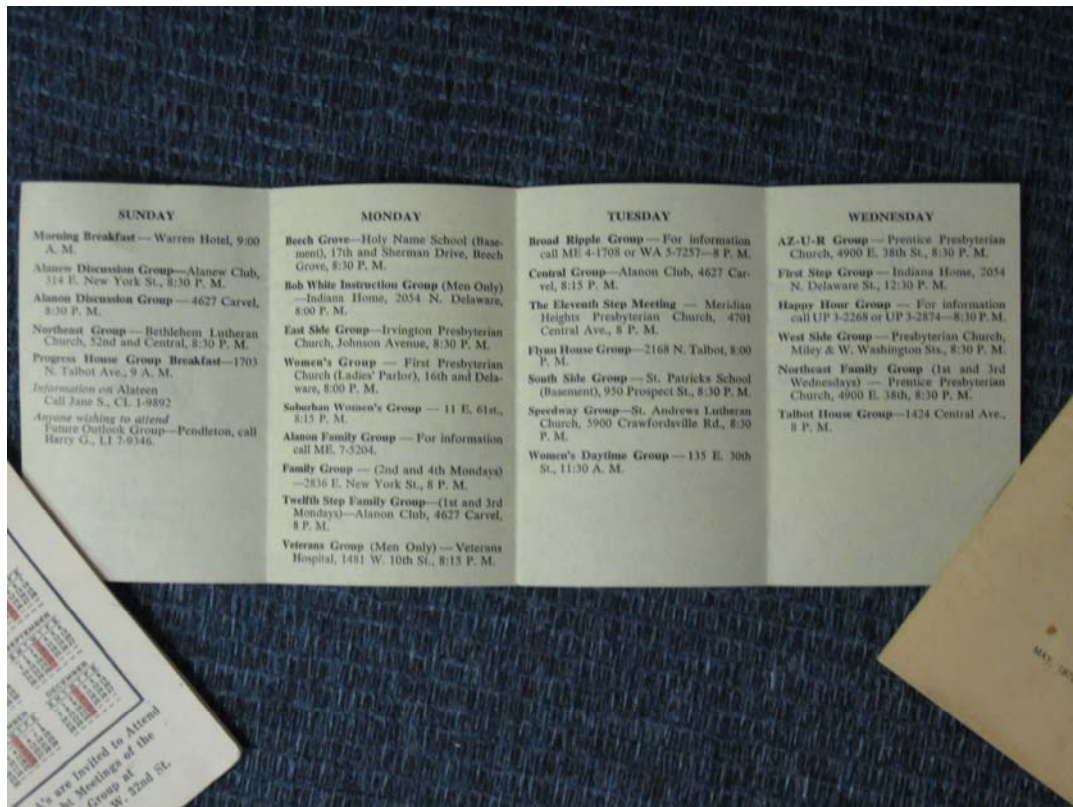
Here are some of the other firsts for Indianapolis A.A.

- Indianapolis had an Intergroup office originally a Club at 124 West Georgia Street, opened on April 3, 1948. Harry L was the first Central Office Manager.
- We were the first in the nation to be incorporated. The attorney who affected this for us is still a very committed member of our Indianapolis Fellowship. Other Intergroups were able to follow our model.
- We were the pioneers of using the Telephone Answering Service to extend our availability. It is an opportunity for those who reach out for help. They can do it here in Indianapolis 24/7 for 52 weeks every year. This was launched in January of 1943.
- The introduction of Tokens or Medallions might have started here. We have the substantiating correspondence over the signature of the Archivist of AA World Services Office.
- We might have been the second group to establish an A.A. meeting in a prison. Late in 1942 or early 1943 we initiated A.A. in the Putnamville Facility. The first AA meeting in prison was San Quentin, CA. - promoted by the Warden Clinton Duffy. A recent re-release article is available from AA Archives via a Grapevine re-print.



THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	DIRECTORY OF MEETINGS
<p><b>North Meridian Group</b>—Meridian Street Methodist Church, 5500 N. Meridian (Rear), 8:15 P. M.</p> <p><b>North Side Group</b>—Trinity Parish House, 33rd and Meridian Sts., 8:15 P. M.</p> <p><b>The Progress House Group</b>—1701 N. Talbot Ave., 8:30 P. M.</p> <p><b>Southport Group</b>—Southport M. E. Church, 8:30 P. M.</p> <p><b>20-40 Group</b>—Christ Church, Monument Circle, 8:30 P. M.</p>	<p><b>Ben Davis Group</b>—Mt. Olive Methodist Church, 1449 S. High School Rd., 8:30 P. M.</p> <p><b>422 Group</b>—Volunteers of America, 422 N. Capitol Ave., 8:00 P. M.</p> <p><b>Home Group</b>—Merchants National Bank, 21 W. 38th St., 8:15 P. M.</p> <p><b>Irvington Group</b>—St. Paul's Church (Basement), 5510 E. 10th St., 8:30 P. M.</p> <p><b>Tri-Carvel Group</b>—Alanon Club, 4627 Carvel, 11:30 A. M., last Friday of the month.</p>	<p><b>Alanew Group</b>—Alanew Club, 314 E. New York St., 8:30 P. M.</p> <p><b>Green Light Group</b>—8:00 P. M., for information call AT. 3-5098.</p> <p><b>Myerson Group (Men Only)</b>—Indiana Home, 2054 N. Delaware St., 8:00 P. M.</p>	<p><b>DIRECTORY OF MEETINGS</b></p> <p></p> <p>March, 1963</p> <p>CENTRAL OFFICE 414 Peoples Bank Building Telephone ME. 4-1708 Indianapolis, Indiana</p>

## March 1963 Meeting List



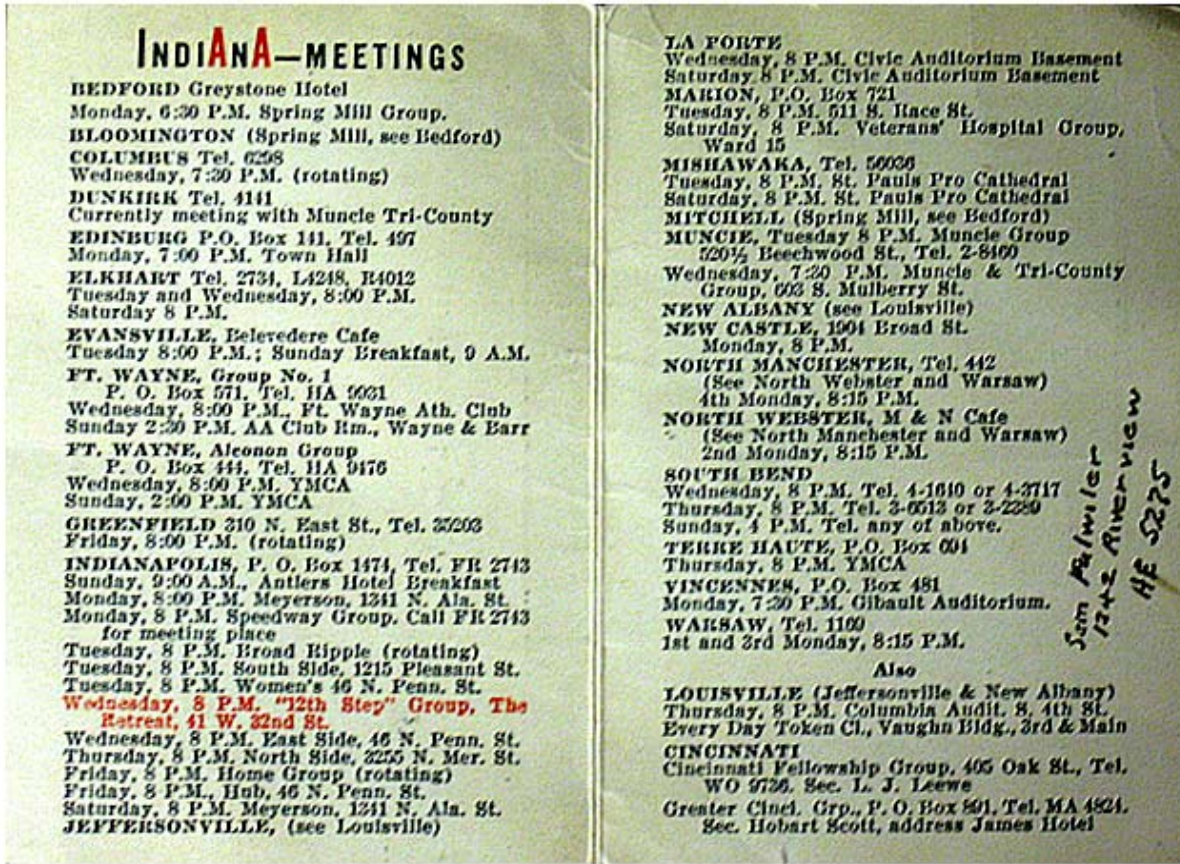
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
<p><b>Morning Breakfast</b>—Warren Hotel, 9:00 A. M.</p> <p><b>Alanew Discussion Group</b>—Alanew Club, 314 E. New York St., 8:30 P. M.</p> <p><b>Alanon Discussion Group</b>—4627 Carvel, 8:30 P. M.</p> <p><b>Northeast Group</b>—Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 32nd and Central, 8:30 P. M.</p> <p><b>Progress House Group Breakfast</b>—1701 N. Talbot Ave., 9 A. M.</p> <p><i>Information on Alateen</i> Call Jane S., CL. 1-9892</p> <p><i>Anyone wishing to attend</i> Future Outlook Group—Pendleton, call Harry G., LI 7-9346.</p>	<p><b>Beech Grove</b>—Holy Name School (Basement), 17th and Sherman Drive, Beech Grove, 8:30 P. M.</p> <p><b>Bob White Instruction Group (Men Only)</b>—Indiana Home, 2054 N. Delaware, 8:00 P. M.</p> <p><b>East Side Group</b>—Irvington Presbyterian Church, Johnson Avenue, 8:30 P. M.</p> <p><b>Women's Group</b>—First Presbyterian Church (Ladies' Parlor), 16th and Delaware, 8:00 P. M.</p> <p><b>Suburban Women's Group</b>—11 E. 61st., 8:15 P. M.</p> <p><b>Alanon Family Group</b>—For information call ME. 7-5204.</p> <p><b>Family Group</b>—2nd and 4th Mondays—2836 E. New York St., 8 P. M.</p> <p><b>Twelfth Step Family Group</b>—(1st and 3rd Mondays)—Alanon Club, 4627 Carvel, 8 P. M.</p> <p><b>Veterans Group (Men Only)</b>—Veterans Hospital, 1481 W. 10th St., 8:15 P. M.</p>	<p><b>Broad Ripple Group</b>—For information call ME. 4-1708 or WA 5-7257—8 P. M.</p> <p><b>Central Group</b>—Alanon Club, 4627 Carvel, 8:15 P. M.</p> <p><b>The Eleventh Step Meeting</b>—Meridian Heights Presbyterian Church, 4701 Central Ave., 8 P. M.</p> <p><b>Flynn House Group</b>—2168 N. Talbot, 8:00 P. M.</p> <p><b>South Side Group</b>—St. Patricks School (Basement), 950 Prospect St., 8:30 P. M.</p> <p><b>Speedway Group</b>—St. Andrews Lutheran Church, 5900 Crawfordville Rd., 8:30 P. M.</p> <p><b>Women's Daytime Group</b>—135 E. 30th St., 11:30 A. M.</p>	<p><b>AZ-U-R Group</b>—Prentice Presbyterian Church, 4900 E. 38th St., 8:30 P. M.</p> <p><b>First Step Group</b>—Indiana Home, 2054 N. Delaware St., 12:30 P. M.</p> <p><b>Happy Hour Group</b>—For information call UP 3-2268 or UP 3-2874—8:30 P. M.</p> <p><b>West Side Group</b>—Presbyterian Church, Miley &amp; W. Washington Sts., 8:30 P. M.</p> <p><b>Northeast Family Group</b> (1st and 3rd Wednesdays)—Prentice Presbyterian Church, 4900 E. 38th, 8:30 P. M.</p> <p><b>Talbot House Group</b>—1424 Central Ave., 8 P. M.</p>



## July 1967 Meeting List



# 1947 Indiana AA Meeting Directory



Seven years earlier than the above directory, there existed only one small meeting in the rather isolated southwestern city of Evansville, but when the Indianapolis Sunday Morning Meetings began to flourish, new meetings began to erupt all over the state. I think all of us owe a debt of gratitude to the old timers who held things together through those many periods of often turbulent growth. In our history lies our hope; if those before us would not have maintained sobriety, what hope would we have today?

Only a few names have been mentioned and many photos of early structures used by AA were not, as yet, available. Perhaps more will be made available for the following editions. It is my hope that this small booklet, incomplete as it may be, will inspire the reader, not only to better appreciate the Indianapolis founders, but to follow up with – as Paul Harvey used to say: “. . . the rest of the story.”

If you would like to offer additional information, please contact:

Bob S.  
212 SW 18<sup>th</sup> Street  
Richmond, IN 47374  
(765) 935-0130  
[rstonebraker212@comcast.net](mailto:rstonebraker212@comcast.net)

### A Timeline:

Indianapolis alcoholic, Doherty Sheerin, had been dry for more than two years during the summer of 1939, but he was "just hanging in there by the skin of his teeth." Meanwhile, in New York, Charlie Towns, the owner of the upscale Towns Hospital alcoholic ward, and staunch supporter of Alcoholics Anonymous, told the AA story to writer Morris Markey, who wrote it and offered it to Fulton Ourster, the editor of the then very popular Liberty Magazine. This story, *Alcoholics and God* was published in September of that year.

Doherty's immediate inquiries led him to an ongoing correspondence with Ruth Hock, the secretary of the Alcoholic Foundation, who in turn contacted the founder of Cleveland, Ohio, AA: Clarence Snyder. The next summer Clarence sent his traveling salesman "pigeon," Irv Meyerson to "12-Step" Doherty and to put him to "work." These two, plus a Mr. Bard, immediately visited the only existing AA meeting in Indiana which was in Evansville, 160 miles south. This group was started by James D. Holmes, who was Akron AA member #8, after Bill W. and Dr. Bob. This was September, 1940.

Doherty was obviously impressed by this group, because he started the first Indianapolis AA meeting on October 28, 1940. By the summer of 1941 *Hotel Breakfast Meetings*, at the Riley Hotel, became a continuing ingredient of Indianapolis AA. This meeting became the "Johnny Appleseed" for the entire state of Indiana. Doherty would introduce new

visitors to each other and provide phone numbers of known alcoholics who lived nearby each members home town. Thus Indiana AA grew by leaps and bounds!

(Please revisit the map in front of this booklet.)

### Appreciation for the Early Timers:

There are few Indiana meetings whose roots are not grounded in the sincere and enthusiastic soil of the Riley and Warren Hotel Breakfast meetings. Many early members drove, or took trains, many miles to attend these 9:00 am functions during the 1940s and 1950s. These dressy occasions would be the high spot of many AAs week; as Thom Ross, from Greenville, Ohio, would say: "I was like going to see the Pope!" Charlie Martin lamented on how most members would appear in coat and tie.

In their devout sincerity to stay sober, and their success in doing so lies our hope. What hope would we have if the lion's share of them stayed drunk?

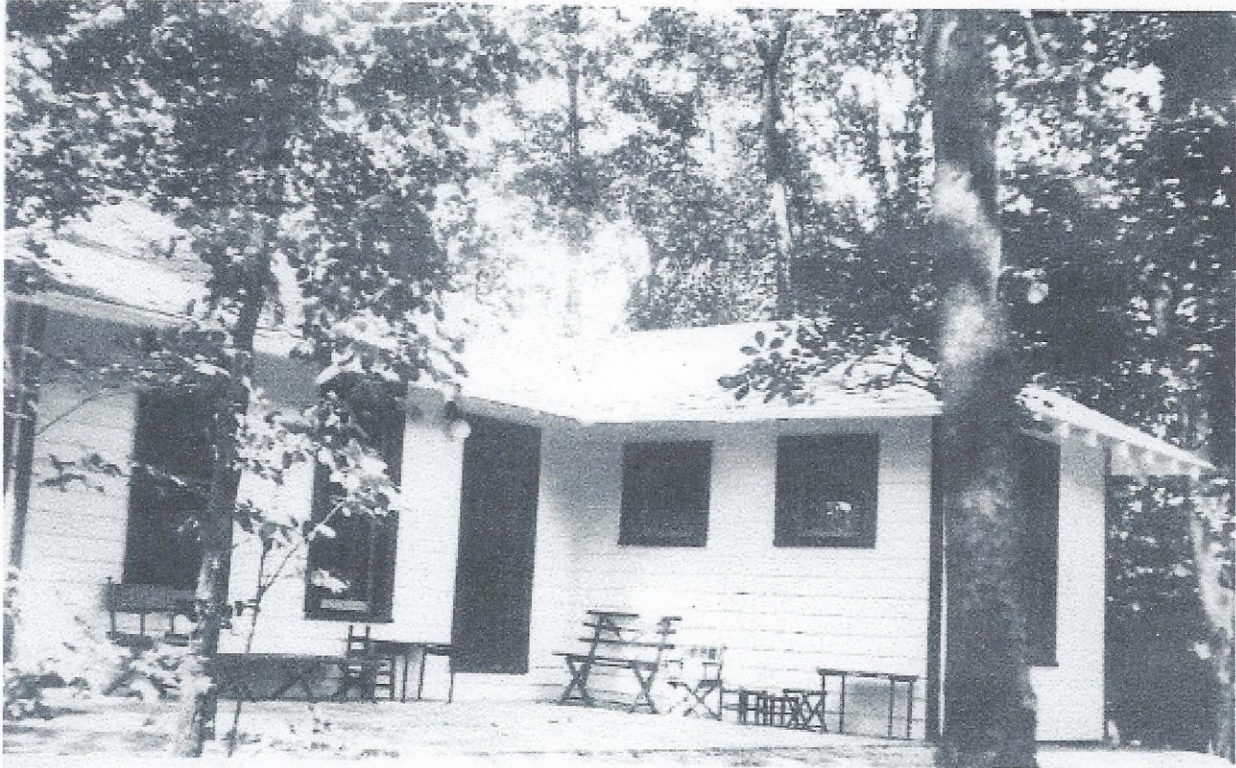
The cleaner-uppers', coffee makers, greeters, the inarticulate as well as the well spoken speakers, the Secretaries, GSRs, DCMs, as well as the Area Delegates are all to be applauded with equal intensity, for each has added their fraction to the sum of our sobriety today.



# Appendix



# The First Indianapolis Meeting



2048 E. 106th Street, Carmel, Indiana, as it appeared on October 28, 1940 when the first Indianapolis AA meeting took place (photo taken in 1931).



Same residence in 2013

## The Tangle – Home of Indiana’s First AA Chapter

June 1, 2012

By Stephanie Carlson Curtis

“At last – A Therapy For Alcoholics – With a Follow Up.”

This is how a newspaperman described the Tangle, a family country home located in the area of 106th Street and Keystone Avenue, which became a haven where alcoholics sought help. In a 1940s advertisement, Indiana’s first home of Alcoholics Anonymous reached out to doctors throughout the state promising a place to dry out, rehabilitate, build important relationships and check accountability for those struggling with the disease – alcoholism.

Doherty Sheerin, affectionately called Dohr by family and friends, was a closet alcoholic. According to writings, he was described as a religious family man who was full of fun and steady as a rock. Friends never saw him drunk. When he became ill with a damaged liver, family and close friends were shocked. Doctors told him he must stop drinking or lose his life. Checking into a rehabilitation facility, he was treated for alcoholism but couldn’t stop, and his drinking became more intense. Former friends turned their backs upon learning that Doherty was an alcoholic. According to Tom, Doherty’s brother, “I had decided that concealment was neither wise nor possible, but this came as a shock. Dorothy had been telling me for years that Doherty was drinking too much, but I shrugged it off on the theory that all wives think their husbands drink too much.”

As Dohr lost control of his alcoholism and became destructive, Tom was granted guardianship of his brother and checked him into Sacred Heart Hospital in Milwaukee, where Dohr was treated for nearly two years. When Dohr returned to Indiana, he lived at The Tangle under the care of an attendant. While in the hospital, Dohr had come across a magazine ad about a new organization in Cleveland called Alcoholics Anonymous. On the day of his release, he wrote to the organization. In 1940, not too long after he sent his letter, a Mr. M. showed up at the front door. “I’m from Cleveland. I’ve come to help you get to work,” he said. According to written accounts, Mr. M. was a traveling salesman named Irv Meyerson who was sent to teach Dohr about the Twelve Step Program, principles developed throughout the years that formed the Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous.

From that moment on Dohr, known as Doherty S. to his fellow recovering alcoholics, made history after holding his first AA meeting at The Tangle in October of 1940. Those in treatment were known on a first name basis, their last names identified by only the first letter to retain the person’s privacy – hence the reason for the organization name – Alcoholics Anonymous.

The Alcoholics Anonymous website reveals a story born in Akron, Ohio, in 1935 when businessmen Bill W., a New York stockbroker, and Dr. Bob S., an Akron surgeon, were determined to cure their hopeless drinking problem through separate struggles. Eventually they met, shared their mutual suffering and sparked the formation of AA. Through hard work, fellowship and spiritual guidance, Bill became sober and was able to continue his recovery by working with others. Bill emphasized that alcoholism was a malady of mind, emotions and body. While Bob, a physician, had never viewed alcoholism as a disease, he took Bill’s advice and ideas to heart, got sober and began reaching out to others adversely affected by alcohol.

Once Dohr connected with AA, there was no turning back and he went on to help thousands of people in their journey to sobriety. Until his death at the age of 62, Doherty lived a sober life, continued to reach out to others fighting the disease and tirelessly introduced new visitors to each other, expanding the Indianapolis AA and becoming a key participant in what has grown to become a global movement that helps people from all walks of life find sobriety.

\*\*\* The information in this story is a compilation of historical accounts from various written materials and websites.



This is The Tangle as it stands today on east 106th Street.

# Sheerin, State A.A. Founder, Succumbs



**DOHERTY SHEERIN**

Doherty Sheerin, 62 years old, nationally known for his work in connection with Alcoholics Anonymous, died yesterday in St. Vincent's Hospital after a long illness.

Mr. Sheerin, a native of Logansport, had served as vice-president of the Thomas D. Sheerin Company Inc. since the death of his brother, Thomas D. Sheerin, in 1950.

Mr. Sheerin formerly had been associated with the old Motor Shop, American Appliance Company, Triumph Lamp Works and

the former Kruse Company. He lived at 4750 Central Avenue.

**HE ACHIEVED** national recognition in 1940 when he brought the Alcoholics Anonymous movement to Indiana and devoted the major part of his time to its successful development in the state.

Credited with aiding thousands of "problem" drinkers, Mr. Sheerin served on the board of the Indiana Home, a sanitarium maintained here by the organization.

A graduate of Purdue University in 1913, Mr. Sheerin was a member of Phi Kappa Psi Fraternity and Iron Key. He also was active in the St. Joap of Arc Catholic Church.

**FUNERAL SERVICES** will be held at 9:30 a.m. tomorrow in Kirby Mortuary and at 10 a.m. in St. Joan of Arc Church. Burial will be in Holy Cross Cemetery. The family requests that flowers be omitted.

Survivors besides the widow, Mrs. Dorothy Madden Sheerin, include three daughters, Mrs. Donald D. Pritchard, Mrs. James E. Rocap Jr. and Miss Dorothy Sheerin, all of Indianapolis; two sons, Simon P. and Daniel Doherty Sheerin Jr., both of Indianapolis; five sisters, Mother Margaret Mary Sheerin, Georgetown Visitation Convent, Washington, D.C.; Mrs. Lawrence Durborow, New York, and Mrs. Walter W. Kuhn, Mrs. Henry Severin and Miss Helen M. Sheerin, all of Indianapolis, and six grandchildren.

Indianapolis Star

January 28, 1953

Indianapolis Star

January 29, 1953

## Doherty Sheerin

Many men and women who had never met Doherty Sheerin are included among those who mourn the death of this native Indiana industrialist, financier and humanitarian. And these mourners who were not personally acquainted are those who may be most appreciative of his endeavors during his life.

They are folk of every walk who today are leading full and productive lives through adherence to a program which was introduced in Indiana by Doherty Sheerin and in the furtherance of which he devoted a goodly part of his time.

The success of Alcoholics Anonymous as a salvation for an afflicted portion of our population is recognized around the world. Despite the pressing duties of a successful career in the realms of industry and finance, Doherty Sheerin devoted himself with honest sincerity to advocacy of the A.A. program.

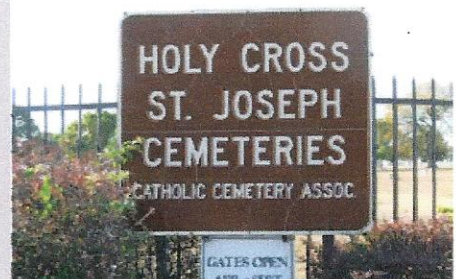
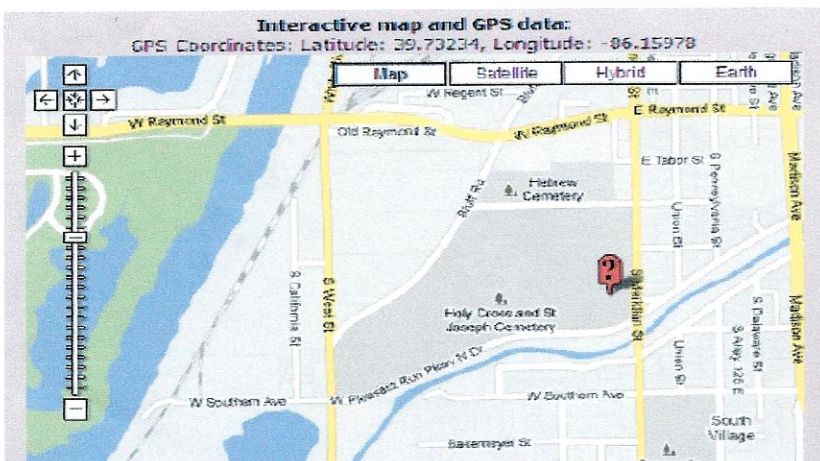
His interest in it and his untiring efforts in behalf of those who have been aided by its tenets bespeak the unselfish heart of a fine and much loved man.

Editorial Page

# Doherty & Dorothy Sheerin



Doherty Sheerin is often thought of as the “Johnny Appleseed” of Indiana AA. JD Holmes actually started Indiana’s first meeting in Evansville during April of 1940, but the Indianapolis hotel meetings started by Doherty in 1941 caused an ongoing avalanche of new AA meetings throughout Indiana. Doherty would introduce ‘lone wolf’ attendees and have them exchange phone numbers; soon new meetings would crop in those respective communities. Indianapolis meetings also began to grow rapidly and by 1952 there were over six-hundred members in the circle city fellowship. Doherty was also involved with starting the Indiana Home treatment center which eventually became Fairbanks Hospital.



The location of the marker; by entering the Holy Cross Saint Joseph Cemeteries from S. West St. and W. Pleasant Run Parkway entrance go to the first lane and turn left. The marker is the second headstone above ground on your right.

**Dohr's Story From His Niece, Laura**  
(From "History of Indianapolis, AA," by Neil S.)

This is the tale of two brothers: Tom, my father, and Doherty, my uncle Dohr. They grew up in a large Irish Catholic family. Tom was the oldest. Three sisters came along and then Doherty. He was followed by a little brother who died young and two little sisters.

Tom and Dohr were the brothers and, although there was an eight year difference in age, there was a strong bond between them. Their families were close too. For years my cousins and I spent almost as much time in each other's houses as we did in our own.

As an uncle, Dohr was affectionate, full of fun and steady as a rock. That's also the way he was with his own children, his brother and sisters and his many friends. It seems never to have occurred to anybody except his wife that Dohr had any problems.

Suddenly, in the spring of 1936, when his daughter and I were in our last year of boarding school, the blow fell. Uncle Dohr was seriously ill with a damaged liver. He had to stop drinking. His life depended upon it. He couldn't do it. He went to Menningers to be treated for alcoholism. He stayed a couple of months, but left without being discharged and resumed what was now clearly compulsive, destructive drinking.

Practically nobody was prepared for this. A devoutly religious, devoted family man, and a pillar of the community, Dohr was known to drink convivially, but his friends never saw him drunk. Some of them received the news of his illness with stark disbelief.

My father told me of one encounter with an old friend, who came up to him on the street and said, "Tom, please tell me, what is the matter with Dohr?" Father answered, "He's an alcoholic." The man gave him a filthy look, turned on his heel and walked away without a word. In telling me about this, my father said:

"I had decided that concealment was neither wise nor possible, but this came as a shock. Still, I had to understand it. Aunt Dorothy had been telling me for years that Dohr was drinking too much, but I just shrugged it off on the theory that all wives think their husbands drink too much. I was with him frequently, and I never saw the slightest evidence."

What to do? Since voluntary commitment had not worked, as a desperate last resort, the family obtained a court order declaring Uncle Dohr to be incompetent and placing him under guardianship. Father took the position that it was better for a man to feel anger and resentment toward his brother than toward his wife, a point of view aunt Dorothy gratefully accepted and so father became his guardian.

I missed most of this because I was away at college, but during my first Christmas vacation, Father left over New Year's to drive Uncle Dohr up to Sacred Heart Hospital in Milwaukee. When he got home, he said it was the hardest thing he had ever to do.

This time, Dohr stayed approximately two years. He was then released conditionally under the care of an attendant. They took up residence at the family's country place, "The Tangle" (on 106th St., in Carmel, Indiana). Dohr was able to occupy himself with a lot of physical work which he enjoyed. We all went out and spent time there as we always had. The attendant managed to keep almost out of sight, but the atmosphere was strained.

I went back to college in the fall, so I wasn't on hand for the next act in the drama. Dohr asked to be released from guardianship. Tom consulted the doctors who said "If you release your brother from guardianship he will be dead in six months." He therefore refused to grant the release, and Dohr took him to court. From what my aunts have told me, it was a dramatic, emotional confrontation. In the end the judge ruled in favor of the plaintiff, Dohr, at which point the two brothers walked across the courtroom and shook hands. This was on January 17, 1940, almost exactly three years three full years after the guardianship had been established.

Dohr didn't die in six months. He lived for thirteen years. While in the hospital, he had seen an ad about a new organization in Cleveland called Alcoholics Anonymous. On the day of his release he wrote to them. A Mr. M. appeared at his front door and said "I'm from Cleveland. I've come to help you get to work." It was slow difficult going. They began with one recruit, Fred. Uncle Dohr and Aunt Dorothy had Fred's whole family over for dinner time after time. Dohr worked unstintingly. As soon as there was an actual group in Indianapolis, he began branching out.

*Dr. Bob and the Good Old Timers* reports, "Doherty S. is responsible for more groups in Indiana than anybody. He'd get a lone wolf from one town together with another one for Sunday breakfast...." Two people were enough to constitute a group and to call in a speaker from Ohio. The Big Book was now available.

By June of 1940, when I graduated from college and came back to Indianapolis to live, AA, though small, was a going concern. Uncle Dohr was busy and very much his old self. A few years after that, I remember my father saying, "Everything is all right, but there is still constraint between us -- because of the guardianship. I'm enormously proud of him, but I don't think he'll ever believe it."

Some years later, Father suffered a heart attack and spent three weeks in the hospital. No visitors were allowed except for my sister and me, but every single day produced another wonderful note from Dohr. I have always believed he never understood what a talented writer he was. The night that Father died, Uncle Dohr got to the hospital almost as soon as I did. The nurses greeted him with, "Oh, you're the one who wrote those notes. Every day I would read them to Mr. Sheerin and he would say, 'That's my brother. That's Doherty. He's the most useful man in town.'" Finally, Dohr knew how Tom felt about him.



## 5 Former Alcoholics Offer to Help Imbibers Climb Aboard the "Wagon"

In contrast to those New Year celebrants who tomorrow will hold their aching heads and say "never again," without really meaning it, are five Indianapolis men who in the past said "never again" and are making it stick.

They were once, to use the ordinary phrase for it, "just plain drunks." But now they are strictly former alcoholics and members of "Alcoholics Anonymous." They know that true alcoholism is a disease and they believe that with their background of experience they can help others who want to say "never again."

### **Business Executive Member.**

It's a strange sort of organization this "Alcoholics Anonymous." In Indianapolis the group is in embryo stage and thus far there are only five members, at least one of whom is a business executive.

But in Cleveland, O., New York, Chicago, Detroit, Mich., and several other cities the "A.A." has fairly strong chapters and the total membership now is about 500 men and women. They boast that two-thirds of their number have laid the foundation for permanent recovery and that more than half have had no "relapse" despite the fact that all were once pronounced incurable alcoholics.

Names aren't often mentioned, but each member stands ready to make himself known to a fellow sufferer and to help him "mount the wagon" with the technique that has worked.

### **Not Reform Group.**

To begin with, the "A.A.'s" say they aren't a reform group, a dry organization or a religious cult. They have no quarrel with alcohol and, in fact, think the fellow who can drink sensibly and keep out of trouble has every right to do so. Their only interest is the "problem drinker," the man - or sometimes the women - who gets the disease, who baffles every cure and who faces a ruined business career and loss of home life.

The five Indianapolis members think this is a particularly good time to make existence of their loosely – knit organization known because they believe more problem drinkers get into serious difficulties during the Christmas – New Year holiday season than at any other time of the year.

“The alcoholic and his problem seldom are understood,” the leader of the A.A. group here says. “The true alcoholic is a very sick man. Too often neither he nor those about him understand that.”

Primary reason for the organization’s existence is that its members believe the former or non-drinking alcoholic can “talk turkey to a fellow rummie” with considerably more success than the best intentioned, even though trained in such work, non-drinking man.

“Knowing this,” says the Indianapolis A.A. leader, “we have banded together in groups over the country and, without fee or obligation, give as much time as our regular business and home life permit to teaching and showing fellow alcoholics how to handle their problem successfully.”

### **Motive Not Unselfish**

Their motive is not entirely unselfish, the A.A. members point out, because they regard their work as “good insurance” for themselves. For the same reason, the recovering alcoholic takes up the work and carries it on to another sufferer.

Such success has crowned the efforts of “Alcoholics Anonymous” that the Alcoholic Foundation of New York has published a booklet about the organization and physicians have written in medical journals about what they consider a new psychotherapy in chronic alcoholism.

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# Pin Ball Machine Gone; Delays Case

## Police Find Exhibit "A" Missing On Return To Tavern.

A gambling case in Municipal Court No. 4 to prove that pin ball machines are illegal, was postponed yesterday by Joseph Wicker, judge pro tem, until Saturday morning, Jan. 18.

It was just as well the case was continued, however, as exhibit "A," the bin ball machine, is missing. The machine was not confiscated when police made three arrests in a tavern, 150 West 16th street, Saturday night. When they returned to the place to obtain the machine yesterday, it was gone.

Mrs. Eugenia Doney, 46 years old, operator of the tavern, was arrested on a charge of keeping a gaming house after Clarence Stud-event, 41, 1700 block North Meridian street, said he had been refused cash for "hits" on the machine. He said he had been paid when winning previously, and that he also had lost on the machine. He was arrested for visiting a gaming house and gaming.

The trial will be the first test case against an injunction served by Judge Earl R. Cox of Circuit Court several weeks ago which read that the machines are not to be molested unless there is evidence of gambling.

The recommendation was made after Lawrence Shaw, defense attorney for Clyde Robinson, Negro, 142 Tacoma terrace, and James Smith, Negro, 1935 Highland place, pointed out that the defendants were held in jail 16 days on vagrancy charges under \$3,000 bond each, and that when they appeared for trial (yesterday)—the prosecuting witnesses and arresting officers were not present.

The defendants were resealed on charges of burglary and grand larceny just prior to the trial.

Shaw asserted: "These men have spent 16 long days in jail and were there over Christmas, and as far as I know, they'll be there until after New Year's."

He said he believed the prosecutor had had ample time to prepare a complete case, when a continuance until after the holidays was requested.

### Ordered Into Court.

Michael F. Morrissey, police chief, said: "I have received word that all the arresting officers in the case have been ordered into court and have tried to contact the judge."

"Because of their night work, officers many times appear on their own time. When all the arresting officers have to appear, I would like to have a complete understanding so that a proper system can be worked out to meet the situation."

# Seek Toll Bridge As Aid to Army

## Commissioners Plan Span Over Ohio River at Mauckport.

The Indiana Toll Bridge Commission will seek construction of a toll bridge over the Ohio river at Mauckport as a means of establishing a direct route for movement of army and Indiana National Guard troops to Fort Knox, Kentucky, and possibly to Fort Benning, Georgia, a commission spokesman said yesterday.

The spokesman added that the plan also called for improvement of Ind. 135 from Brownstown to Mauckport and Ky. 60 from Brandenburg, Ky., to Tip Top, Ky. He exhibited a letter from a high army official setting out that the route would be valuable in avoiding delays through Louisville, Ky.

### Awaits Suit Hearing.

William G. Minor of Cannellton, chairman of the commission, said he was "awaiting eagerly" the hearing of a suit for an injunction against purchase by the group of the New Harmony bridge over the Wabash river.

Declaring the commission was seeking an early hearing, Mr. Minor charged that newspapers

# MERIT SYSTEM GAINS IN PO

## Association Holds P Favors Civil Serv Plan for State.

Proof that the public favor merit system in selection of officials is indicated in the overwhelming percentages in favor of the plan in polls of public officials. The Indiana Merit System Association in a statement by the group.

The statement was sent to officials of the incoming administration and to leaders of both of the Legislature.

Pointing out the need of retaining and promoting employes on the basis of merit and accomplishment, the statement continues, "No more important responsibility than the merit plan for the promotion of efficiency and economy in state government faces the administration."

### Sees Legislature Assailed.

"The Republican-controlled General Assembly will be assailed by pressures to pass legislation which will open the way to patronage party workers. The Government leader of the Democratic will be equally hard pressed members of his own party. Sensible and statesmanlike action to this employment problem merit system for the select state employes."

"We recommend a good effort for the adoption of a high standard and personnel merit system in governmental operation similar to those that have been successful and necessary in private industry."

### Organization State-Wide.

The Indiana Merit System Association is composed of representatives of state-wide organizations interested in the merit system. It has been organized to coordinate the efforts of these groups to secure qualified personnel in government by making their opinion more vocal and more effective, and in promoting legislation. Mrs. Walter S. Greenough, temporary chairman of the association.

The committee in charge of the organization is Mrs. Greenough representing the Indiana League Women Voters; W. J. Stout, representing the Junior Chamber Commerce; Thomas L. Me representing the Indiana Conference on Social Work; Mrs. J. L. Murray, Indiana Congress Parents and Teachers, and Roy V. Peel, Indiana University the National Municipal League

Nov. 19, 1940

Doherty Sheerin,  
333 W. 16th Place,  
Indianapolis, Ind.

Dear Mr. Sheerin:

Thanks so much for your letters received during that last rapid exchange. It was interesting to hear about Robert Bard. Hope he is still very much with you. Give him our best regards.

The Indianapolis group (all of it), certainly picked a problem as an initial effort in Fred Fulton. For over a year when this A.A. really began to grow, most of the newcomers were men in the middle forties and over, and it came to be rather an accepted conclusion that little or nothing could be done for men or women troubled by alcoholism until they reached approximately that age, due to the fact that physically and mentally they seemed to get by in one way or another not realizing the seriousness of the situation until about that age. However, slowly younger men, between the ages of thirty and forty began to recover through the A.A. methods and principles and we were much encouraged. As one of the New York members puts it, we began to realize that a person didn't necessarily have to hit bottom in the literal sense; if he were sincere, the bottom could be brought up to him through understanding and realization. There are now perhaps half a dozen A.A.s in good standing between the ages of 25 and 50 and we feel that is a very encouraging development.

All of the above is simply to clarify our reasons for believing that it will be difficult to really keep Fred Fulton completely 'dry'. I know you realize how sincerely hope he can do so, but we do want both you and Robert Bard to keep from being discouraged in any way if he does not make the grade immediately, for of course it will be difficult for him. We may be altogether mistaken and he may take to it like a duck to water, for he certainly seems sincere in wanting to do something about it. We have seen miracles happen before.

Your attitude about Fred Fulton not getting his hope and help from you but from the course of your talk together is indicative of the spirit we are all striving for and certainly very true. And that is why this A.A. work is so strong, because each individual in trying to help another strengthens himself also.

Mr. Fulton Sr. has the address of our Chicago

(INCOMPLETE)

FROM ?  
BILL WILSON ?

The first Indianapolis meeting on Oct. 28, 1940 was attended by Doherty Sheerin, Mr. Robert Bard, and possibly Fred Fulton. Another early member of this group was Alex Vonnegut, a probably non-alcoholic uncle of known author Kurt Vonnegut. At year's end there were five group members.